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PLUCK AND LUCK

THE CAPTAIN OF No 9

OR THE BOY LOGGERS OF LOON LAKE

AND OTHER STORIES

By Howard Austin



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PLUCK AND LUCK

Stories of Adventure

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THE CAPTAIN OF No. 9

OR,

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By HOWARD AUSTIN

CHAPTER I.

HOW THE MOON CAME UP OVER THE ICE.

The wind swept wildly over the frozen lake, and, rushing on through the forest, howled down the chimney of the loggers' hut and rattled the branches of the big pine tree over the shingle roof.

The noise woke up Dick Fowler, who was snugly wrapped up in many blankets and lying close to his chum, Napoleon Nibs, for the night was very cold, the thermometer being away down below zero, and it was all the boys could do to keep warm in bed.

Dick listened.

He thought at first that a wildcat or an "Indian Devil"—a species of wolverine common in the forests of Northern Maine—had climbed upon the roof and was scratching on the shingles with its claws.

The sound came again and again. Dick pulled the blankets up around his shoulders and turned over.

"It's only the wind," he muttered. "Gracious, but it's a cold night! This ought to make a crust and I've no doubt it will. If the gang can only get into No. 9 with the oxen to-morrow we may see some work."

With these thoughts floating through his mind Dick settled himself down to sleep again, but somehow sleep wouldn't come. There were reasons for this.

In the first place Napoleon Nibs would snore. He was snoring now, indulging in a continuous performance of snorts, grunts and gurgles which might have sounded very comical to a disinterested listener, but aggravated Dick terribly.

He pulled the bedclothes over his ears and tried to drown the sound, but it was no use, sleep would not come.

Then, besides this, Dick was worried—terribly worried.

Here he was alone with Napoleon Nibs in Camp No. 9 of the Loon Lake Lumber Company, away up in the wilds of Aroostook County, that vast unexplored region of Northern Maine.

Dick was only eighteen years old and Napoleon a year his junior, yet no two brighter boys or better loggers could be found in the State of Maine.

Dick's father had been a logger before him and ~~was~~ was our hero's third winter in the woods. The first part of the season he had worked under Bill Tweedie in Camp No. 1, but three

weeks before our story opens Dick had received orders to go up to the new camp just about to be opened at the head of Loon Lake.

This was No. 9. The letter received from the company's office at Bangor created Dick captain of No. 9 with captain's pay, and instructed him to take one man and go up to the new camp and put in time picking out the trees to be cut until a gang was sent to him, when he was to take full charge, make the cut and haul the logs to the lake to be ready for the spring freshets, when they would be floated down the Hadawaska River to the Aroostook, thence down the Aroostook to the St. John, where they would be joined to the bigger rafts and proceed on down the big river to St. John, New Brunswick, to be sawed up into boards.

This was the business programme, but unfortunately it had not been carried out. The weather had been unusually mild and the snow soft. It had not been possible to get the ox-teams up to No. 9, even if Bill Tweedie had been disposed to send them, which he was not, and right here was where Dick's trouble came in.

He was a captain without a crew and there was trouble in all the camps. Rumor had it that the Loon Lake Lumber Company was in serious financial difficulties. The men had not seen a cent of pay since the season opened and many of them had back pay due them from the year before.

Dick knew how they felt and he fully expected a strike or worse before the season was over if something was not done to prevent it.

Dick did not believe in strikes; he was most anxious to keep out of the one which he felt was surely coming. The lumber crews were made up of French Canadians, half-breed Indians and Maine backwoodsmen, a lawless, desperate set of men, who would have struck long ago if they had not been waiting for the February supply of provisions to come to them from Fort Fairfield.

The sleds had arrived early in the week and the provisions had been distributed among the several camps. No money came with them. The promised visit of the paymaster had been again delayed.

"It's coming," thought Dick, pondering on all this with his head under the bedclothes. "It's surely coming, and—oh, confound you! Will you never stop that noise?"

Napoleon Nibs had just given another of his unearthly snorts. Dick's patience was exhausted. If he could not sleep he was resolved that his bedfellow should not either and he gave him a kick which came near tumbling the boy out of bed.

"Oh! Ow! Ouch! What in thunder are you doing?" growled Napoleon Nibs, rubbing his leg.

"Stop it!" cried Dick. "Confound you, it's enough to keep a regiment awake. I'll go down and sleep on the floor by the fire if you don't quit."

"Why, what's the matter, Dick?" demanded Napoleon, who was generally called "Nibsey" for short, rolling over now.

"You're snoring again."

"No I hain't."

"But you were, Nibsey. I can't sleep on account of it."

"Well, I'm sorry. I can't help it. Gee, how the wind blows!"

"Yes, it's an awful night, Nibsey. Cold as Greenland and getting colder every minute. I suppose it's the loneliness of this infernal camp that oppresses me as much as anything. Here we are all by ourselves nine miles from nowhere and everything going wrong. I can't help worrying—it's no use."

"Say, Dick?"

"What is it, Nibsey?"

"You're nervous."

"Well, I suppose I am, but I can't help that any more than you can help snoring."

"Tell you what, I'll get up and light the fire and get out the old banjo. We'll whoop her up till you get tired out and then mebbe you can get some sleep."

Now this was really very kind of Nibsey, who had no more nerves than a lobster and loved the bed as well as any boy ever born.

"No, no! I won't have it," replied Dick. "Go to sleep again, Nibsey, and I'll stick it out a while longer. If I don't get asleep in half an hour I'll get up and go downstairs and try it by the fire—by gracious, what was that?"

"H-e-l-l-o! H-e-l-l-o! No. 9, hello!" was the faint cry borne toward the hut on the wind.

"Some one coming up the lake!" cried Nibsey, sitting up in bed.

"H-e-l-l-o! H-e-l-l-o! H-e-l-l-o! No. 9, hello!"

Once more the cry reached the boys' ears.

Dick threw back the bedclothes and sprang to the floor.

The little alarm clock on the bureau showed that it was after four, much later than he had supposed.

"Get up, Nibsey. Go downstairs and pile the logs onto the fire!" he cried. "It's one of the boys and whichever one it is he'll be half frozen. I'll give him the horn."

While Nibsey was dressing Dick, who had already hustled on his trousers and stockings, ran downstairs, and, taking down a long tin dinner horn, opened the door and blew a shrill blast.

From the little hill on which the hut stood he could see a long way down the lake.

The moon was shining brightly and it seemed to Dick that there were more stars in the sky than he had ever seen before.

Away down on the ice he could make out the figure of a man skating rapidly toward the camp and he clapped the horn to his mouth and blew a shrill blast.

Then he could see the man put his hand against his face and in a moment the shout came:

"H-e-l-l-o, No. 9! H-e-l-l-o, D-i-c-k F-o-w-l-e-r!"

"Hello!" yelled Dick. "Who are you?"

He did not get the answer then, but it came when he had repeated the question for the third time.

"It's Ike Moon, up from No. 1," he said, turning to Nibsey, who was piling the logs on the hearth. "This means trouble sure."

"What are you going to do about it, Dick?" asked Nibsey. "Join in with the boys, I s'pose?"

"I suppose I shall have to. They'll kill me if I don't," replied Dick, gloomily.

"It's tough; just as you got to be captain, too."

Dick was silent. He shut the door, put on his shoes and stood by the fire waiting for the arrival of the messenger from the redoubtable Bill Tweedle, the biggest bully and bluffer in the company's service and captain of Camp No. 1.

In a few moments the crunch of Ike's footsteps was heard on the snow outside and as Dick flung open the door Mr. Moon walked in.

He was a perfect giant in stature, his dress was a suit of heavy blue flannel with pink stars on his breast, his knees and his back, his head being almost entirely enclosed in a big green worsted cap, his eyebrows and stubby mustache white with the frost.

"Phew, but it's cold!" he exclaimed, "Shut the door, Dick. Bully for you, Nibsey; that fire is a regular old snorter. Say, boys, the strike is on. Bartlett's on his way to the lake with a few dollars for each of us and a lot of fresh promises. We won't have none of it. If we don't get all our pay we are going to burn every camp and do up Bartlett for fair. Bill says you are to go down the lake and lay for him at the Carrying Place in case he should come in that way. If you strike him you are to steer him to No. 1. What do you stand there staring at me for—don't you hear?"

"Yes, I hear," replied Dick. "I hear every word you say. Look here, Ike Moon, does Bill Tweedle intend to kill that man?"

"Oh, waal, I don't think he'll ever be much more use to society after Bill's through with him," grinned Ike, pulling off his mittens and spreading his big hands out before the cheerful blaze. "Hope you don't intend to funk, young feller; you may expect to hear from Bill yourself if you do."

"What's to be done after the camps are burned?" asked Dick.

"Oh, waal, that there hain't no concern of mine. We're out for revenge and we are going to have it. Plan is to gather up all provisions and move over the line into the provinces. Bill's idee is that we can get plenty of work in the Canuck camps up around Grand Falls, and they can't tech us there."

"Yes, I suppose that's all so."

"Of course it is. We have been shamefully used and we orter get square. Come, Dick, what's the word? I'm on the move to No. 8 to notify the boys there. Will you go?"

"Yes," replied Dick, "I'll go. Let me understand fully. If Mr. Bartlett comes in by way of the Carrying Place I'm to betray him into Bill Tweedle's hands."

CHAPTER II.

THE WATCH AT THE CARRYING PLACE.

"Dick, danged if I don't think we've passed it."

"Oh, no!"

"Don't you be too sure. There's so much snow on the ground that I'll be blowed if I feel sure that I could tell the mouth of the creek."

"That's all right, Nibsey. I know the Carrying Place winter or summer. We are not there yet. I'll let you know when we are."

Dick and Nibsey were skating down Loon Lake under the early morning stars.

There had been no further delay at No. 9 than to get a cup of coffee for Ike Moon and themselves.

Ike drank three cups scalding hot and then traveled on over the ice to carry the word to the big gang at No. 8, leaving Dick

and Nibsey to obey the order of the chief of the striking lumbermen, and Ike never doubted that it would be obeyed.

But Nibsey, as he skated along beside his chum, was not exactly of the same mind.

"Dick," he said, "why don't you say something to a feller, hey?"

"What do you want me to say?" asked Dick.

"You hain't really going to do this job?"

"What job?"

"Oh, now just as though you didn't know! Give this poor snoozer the steer to No. 1. You know what Bill Tweedie is. He'd just as soon stick a knife into a man as a moose any day in the week; he'll kill Mr. Bartlett sure."

"Yes," said Dick. "That's what he intends to do. Ben Bartlett is treasurer of the Loon Lake Lumber Company, as you know. He's a good man. It is to him that I owe my promotion to captain. I did some little favors for his daughter Jessie when she and her friends came up to No. 6 last summer and I had more than one pleasant talk with him. I don't believe he has anything more to do with holding the men's money back than I have. I know him to be an honest man."

"That's just it," replied Nibsey, "and yet you told Ike you'd do the job. I didn't think it of you, Dick—no, I didn't. If it was me——"

"Hold up, Nibsey. I never told Ike Moon anything of the kind."

"Yes, you did, too. You know you did."

"I say I didn't. I told him I'd go to the Carrying Place and wait for Mr. Bartlett in case he came that way, as I hope and pray he may. That's what I told him, Nibsey, but I didn't say what I would do after I met the man."

"Gee!" cried Nibsey. "Then you fooled him? You hain't a-goin' to do it! Hooray! I was afraid I should have to lick you, Dick, and I didn't want to do that."

"I should hope you wouldn't have to try it, Nibsey, for your own sake, but I would sooner you'd stick a knife into me than I'd take Mr. Bartlett down to No. 1. No, sir! He goes to No. 9 and out of these diggings just as quick as the horse is able to take him back to Fort Fairfield. I shall go with him and you——"

"Don't you leave me behind, Dick," broke in Nibsey. "I'm no striker. I'd rather be dead than join in with Bill Tweedie's gang. I know them. It's nothing but drink whisky and play poker all night long and—now, say. I'll be gol danged if we hain't past the Carrying Place. There's Scoodic and you can't see that till you're past the creek."

Dick stopped and looked around. The snow had changed everything. It was true that the big bare peak of Scoodic Mountain could not be seen until one had passed the little creek which they were seeking now.

Away up in the Aroostook in the winter time the creeks and rivers form the roads. Otter Creek, flowing out of Loon Lake, passed Fort Fairfield, from which point Mr. Bartlett would have to start to drive into the lumber camps.

There were three other creeks besides this one, any of which the traveler might choose, but that he would drive up along the bed of one of them was absolutely sure.

And while we are explaining, a word about the Carrying Place, for it is a term which may have puzzled the reader a bit.

It is a Canadian phrase in common use in Northern Maine and means a place where the Indians used to pick up their canoes and carry them over rapids or rocks.

There was just such a place at the mouth of Otter Creek; it left Loon Lake over a bed of broken stone and ran on to a little fall just below, after which it took a winding course to the St. John.

This was the "Carrying Place" and as Dick looked around

he immediately spied it. A great bank of snow had drifted in on the creek, so changing its appearance that he might indeed have passed it if Nibsey had not been sharp enough to call his attention to the mountain peak.

The boys now took off their skates and built a great fire on the ice, piling on the hemlock boughs until they had made sure of a good bed of coals.

Here they waited until daylight and for an hour afterward, but still there were no signs of the treasurer.

Dick's heart sank. He began to feel afraid that Mr. Bartlett had come in by some other creek.

"If he has, heaven help him!" he exclaimed. "I wouldn't give two cents for his life if he falls into Bill Tweedie's hands."

"But we can't do nothing about it nohow if he has," replied Nibsey.

"Not a thing."

"What will you do if you find out it's so? Make for Fort Fairfield, I suppose?"

"I suppose we shall have to. They'll burn No. 9 with the rest of the camps."

"Blame 'em," said Nibsey. "I wish I dared to lick that Bill Tweedie. I believe I could do it, too."

Another hour passed.

The boys did some skating and piled on some more hemlock boughs to keep the fire up.

It was not so cold now and the sky had all clouded over. There was every evidence of a big snowstorm and by nine o'clock it struck them.

The wind was still high and the snow came down thickly.

The situation of our two watchers had now become dangerous. It was as much as their lives were worth to remain on the lake if the storm should increase, as it appeared likely to do.

"I don't see but we shall have to get back to No. 9, Nibsey," said Dick, gloomily. "We can't skate if we hold on here much longer and yet if Mr. Bartlett should come—by thunder! Look there!"

Dick pointed to the thick clump of hemlocks on the left of the Carrying Place and Nibsey was all excitement when he saw a large buck moose standing on top of the bank.

"Hush! Not a word!" breathed Dick, unslinging the shotgun which he had brought down from the camp. "We want that fellow if we can get him and I think we can."

Dick was a crack shot. Moose hunting was a sort of specialty with the boy.

He dropped on one knee, sighted the moose, which stood absolutely motionless, looking off on the frozen lake, and let fly.

Instantly the moose gave a spring into the air, and, with a frightened snort, bounded down over the drift and sprang away along the bed of the creek.

"A miss!" cried Nibsey.

"Not much!" retorted Dick. "I hit him. Come on, Nibsey, we'll run the fellow down yet."

The moose scarcely ran faster than Dick, as he dashed over the ice toward the creek.

CHAPTER III.

LOST IN THE STORM.

Dick was right. He had hit the moose in the left shoulder. There was a trail of blood to guide the boys over the freshly fallen snow.

"We'll get him. We'll get him, Nibsey," Dick called back. They were past the Carrying Place now and running on over the frozen bed of Otter Creek. The moose for some reason had

chosen a straight course and avoided the woods, probably fearing the deep snow.

"Hark!" cried Nibsey, after a moment: "Don't you hear sleigh bells, Dick?"

"I'll be blest if I don't!" answered Dick. "Can it be Mr. Bartlett at last?"

It was hard to tell just then, for the snow was getting thicker every instant, but after a moment or two, during which time the jingling bells sounded louder and louder, the boys came in sight of the moose.

It had stopped and seemed to be sinking down in the snow.

"We've got him!" shouted Nibsey. "Look ahead, Dick, there comes the sleigh, too!"

Dick did not need any one to tell him. A double-seated cutter drawn by a stout horse was just emerging from the whirl of snowflakes on ahead.

There were two persons in it, a man and a woman.

"Why, it's Mr. Bartlett and Jessie with him!" shouted Dick, dashing on.

His cry and the sound of the bells seemed to rouse the moose to a last dying effort.

He straightened up and pawed the snow.

"Look out! Look out, Mr. Bartlett! He'll gore the horse!" shouted Dick.

It seemed as if Mr. Bartlett had his first sight of the maddened animal then.

He tried to turn aside, but was not quick enough.

The horse reared and backed, throwing the cutter against a tree and almost turning it over.

Then the moose lowered his horns and made a dash.

Jessie screamed.

The moose struck and missed, for, doubtless, his sight was beginning to fail.

Again he drew back, shook his head and made another dash.

The horse reared again and Mr. Bartlett was thrown over backward.

"Oh, shoot him!" screamed Jessie. "Shoot him!"

Dick banged away, taking the moose in the heart and sending him down into the snow dead.

"A good shot!" cried Mr. Bartlett, who was one of the cool kind. "Whoa, boy! Whoa! Quiet, now! Hello, Dick Fowler, so it's you, is it? Didn't recognize you at first. And the Honorable Napoleon Nibs, too! Well, well! Jessie, my dear, you see whom we have here?"

"Certainly I do," replied the girl. "How do you do, Dick? How do you do, Nibsey? Oh, I am so glad we have met you. I've been terribly afraid father would not be able to find No. 1 in all this storm."

Dick raised his hat politely, and Nibsey began grinning.

"I think that you had better let me drive you to No. 9," said Dick, very quietly. "It's much nearer than No. 1. I am ever so glad to see you, Miss Jessie, and so surprised, too."

He gave Mr. Bartlett a warning look as he spoke.

The treasurer of the Loon Lake Lumber Company turned deathly pale, but he restrained himself better than Dick believed he would.

"Why, certainly. If No. 9 is the nearer we had better go there by all means," he said. "By the way, Dick, how did you hear we were coming up to the camp to-day?"

"Ike Moon told me, sir. I suppose you sent word to Mr. Tweedie."

"Telegraphed to Fort Fairfield to have a special messenger sent into camp. I presume it was done."

"I presume so. I have been at No. 9. I can't say."

"How are things at No. 9, Dick?"

"Quiet, sir. I'm surprised to see Miss Jessie up at this time of year."

"Oh, I just made up my mind that father shouldn't come

alone," explained Jessie. "He's not well and he needs some one to look after him. I do hope you have got a good fire at No. 9, Dick. I'm just about frozen."

"There'll be one in five minutes after we get there," replied Dick. "Mr. Bartlett, come and have a look at the moose. The horse will stand now. We'll hitch the carcass on behind the cutter and I'll broil the finest moose steak for Miss Jessie that she ever tasted when we get up to No. 9."

Mr. Bartlett understood.

"What's the matter, Dick?" he whispered, as they stood side by side looking down at the dead moose.

"The men have struck, sir. They are going to burn all the camps and Bill Tweedie has sworn to do you up," replied Dick, in a low tone.

"So? The scoundrel! It was he who wrote that I ought to come down and have a talk with the men. I was coming anyway, Dick. The company has been in a little trouble, but we are all right now, for we have worked off a lot of old stock for cash. I have brought down the money to pay off all hands to the last cent."

"Good!" said Dick. "All the same, I don't believe you are safe at No. 1. Bill Tweedie is a terrible fellow. If he knew you had the money he'd kill you and make off with it all. Better come to No. 9 and we'll talk it over. I can get around among the men and fix it up with them. Tweedie ought to be drummed out of the camp."

"And yet he is the best logger in the Aroostook," mused Mr. Bartlett. "I should hate to lose him now. There's a gang of sixty men coming to No. 9, Dick, and you are to be captain over them all. Well, well, this is a bad business. If it wasn't for my daughter I should go straight to No. 1 and face them, but as it is——"

"As it is you must do as I say," broke in Dick, and he went on to tell of the plottings of the loggers and about Ike Moon's visit to the camp.

Meanwhile Jessie was talking to Nibsey and when Dick and her father came back to the sleigh there was nothing about the faces of either to betray the anxiety they felt.

"We are going to No. 9 with Dick," said Mr. Bartlett, and then the boys proceeded to tie the carcass of the moose to the back of the cutter, using the halter for a rope.

By the time this was accomplished and the boys were ready to get into the sleigh the snow was falling faster than ever.

As they drove over the big drift at the Carrying Place and out on to Loon Lake the wind came sweeping down upon them, blowing the snow in their faces so that they could hardly see.

"Bless me! This is a terrible storm!" exclaimed Mr. Bartlett to Dick, who sat beside him on the front seat.

"Better give me the lines, sir. I don't believe you can find the way."

"Which I am very sure I can't," answered Mr. Bartlett, "and I only hope you can, Dick."

"I think it will be all right," said Dick. "Don't worry. Anyhow, my chance is ever so much better than yours."

"Dick, do you really think there is any danger of our getting lost?" demanded Jessie, leaning over to the front seat.

"Not a bit," replied Dick, with a confidence which he was far from feeling, for the truth was there was the greatest danger of getting turned around on the pond and Dick knew it perfectly well.

He drove on as rapidly as possible, making every effort to hold a straight course up the lake.

The wind swept past them, blowing the snow in their faces with blinding fury.

Mr. Bartlett knew all about the Aroostook and he at once perceived that their lives were in the greatest danger.

"Dick," he whispered at length, "how far is it from the Carrying Place to No. 9?"

"About two miles, sir."
 "And we have already gone at least three."
 "I'm afraid so."
 "Dick, we are making a circle."
 "I hope not. We are so anxious we may be mistaken in the time."
 "Can nothing be done?"
 "Nothing but to keep on going. If we are making a circle we may strike No. 8 or No. 6."
 "You are sure you started right?"
 "Oh, yes."
 But it was not so.
 Dick had started wrong; the circle had begun almost the instant he left the fire.
 No one but those who have tried to travel in a blinding snow-storm on a level surface can appreciate this.
 The truth was Dick was now driving in exactly the opposite direction from No. 9.
 A little further and even the phlegmatic Nibsey had to speak.
 "Say, Dick, there hain't no use in going no further this way. We hain't going toward No. 9," he called out.
 "Who says so?" cried Dick. "Hooray! There's the hut now! I knew I was right!"

Out of the gloom the shore of the lake had suddenly loomed up before them and there, standing on the hill, was a small log hut with the smoke curling out of the chimney.

Dick drove up the hill and brought up in front of the door with a sweep.

Not until Mr. Bartlett had jumped out did he discover his blunder.

"Great guns!" he ejaculated. "This isn't No. 9! It's No. 1!"
 At the same instant the door was thrown back.

A man in lumberman's dress, holding a double-barreled shotgun, stood in the doorway, while three or four others pressed close behind.

It was the redoubtable Bill Tweedie himself.

"Good for you, Dick Fowler!" he exclaimed. "Mr. Bartlett, your humble servant, sir! What's the state of the money market? I hope you have brought up a sleigh load of cash?"

CHAPTER IV.

THE KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

Nothing could exceed Dick Fowler's terror and disgust when he discovered that instead of taking Mr. Bartlett and Jessie to No. 9 he had brought them to No. 1 and right into the enemy's camp.

He was, indeed, very much more disturbed about it than Mr. Bartlett himself, for the treasurer of the lumber company was well used to the ways of the rough loggers, and he could not believe that matters were so serious as Dick well knew them to be.

"Why, how are you, Bill?" he exclaimed, extending his hand to Tweedie. "Glad to see you. How is everything going? Are we going to have a good run this spring?"

Tweedie put his hand behind him and scowled, while the other loggers at the open door regarded the treasurer with black, threatening glances which were anything but encouraging, to say the least.

"I don't know nothing about what kind of a run it will be, boss," he replied. "Fact is, we fellers are about sick of promises. We want our money and we mean to have it, too."

"Just so," replied Mr. Bartlett, "and you shall get it. Don't you be afraid of that, Bill Tweedie. You shall get every cent that's coming to you and interest on the back pay."

"More promises," growled Tweedie. "I tell you again they don't go."

"Well, now, come, this is rather a strange reception for me to meet with on the company's premises," replied Mr. Bartlett, beginning to show his increasing anxiety in his face. "Are you going to keep my daughter out in the storm? I don't speak for myself, though I've done a good deal for you, first and last, Bill Tweedie, as you very well know."

"Oh, waal, neow, I don't take no stock in what's past and gone," replied Tweedie. "That's all right and we boys are all right, too. We don't propose to harm Miss Jessie, but we'll tell you plump and plain we want our dough."

Then Jessie did a very foolish thing, the result of which only goes to show how foolish it is for ladies, old or young, to interfere in business matters.

"Oh, Mr. Tweedie!" she exclaimed, "don't be too hard on father. He has got the money right here in the sleigh. He'll pay you every cent."

Mr. Bartlett's face assumed an expression of dismay. Dick, who had followed Mr. Bartlett, while Jessie was holding the reins, took hold of his gun.

"That true?" demanded Tweedie. "Say, boss, is that true?"

"Well, suppose it is," replied Mr. Bartlett. "I'm not paying now. To-morrow I shall visit all the camps and——"

"Throw up your hands! There's no to-morrow about it! We want all that money right now!" hissed Tweedie, suddenly thrusting his gun into Mr. Bartlett's face, while the other loggers came rushing out of the hut.

What might have happened if it had not been for Dick's promptness it is hard to say.

"Drop it!" he shouted, leveling his own gun and sending a shot at Tweedie. "Jump in, Mr. Bartlett—quick!"

Tweedie got the shot in the arm before he could fire; his gun fell into the snow, and, with a dismal yell, the ruffian sprang back breathing maledictions upon Dick and shouting:

"Kill 'em, boys! Kill 'em! We want that cash!"

Mr. Bartlett jumped into the sleigh with an agility worthy of a younger man.

Dick fired again right into the advancing crowd of loggers, tossing the reins to Mr. Bartlett.

It was all unexpected. The men had not looked for this and they tumbled over each other in their eagerness to get back into the hut, while Mr. Bartlett, as quick as possible, turned the horse and drove off into the storm, Dick sending two more shots flying back at the hut as a warning that they had better be left to depart in peace.

Now it has taken a good many words to tell all this, but in reality it was all the work of a minute.

"Look out for yourself, old man! I'll get square with you, Dick Fowler! This is only the beginning of the fun!" Bill Tweedie's voice was heard shouting behind them as they rode away.

"Well, well, well!" exclaimed Mr. Bartlett, once they were safely out on Loon Lake and hidden from the enemy by the thickly falling snow. "This is a bad state of affairs and no mistake. What in the world is going to become of us? We can't fight the whole gang and it looks very much as if we would have to do it now."

"Miss Jessie hadn't orter said nothing about that there money," remarked Nibsey, oracularly. "That's what."

"Oh, is it my fault? Is it all my fault?" moaned Jessie. "Father, don't you think we had better go back to the fort?"

"Shut up, Nibsey!" cried Dick. "The least you can do is to hold your tongue."

"Waal, neow, it's so, hain't it, Mr. Bartlett?" persisted the impolite Nibsey.

"It certainly is," replied the treasurer, "but, Jessie, don't you worry about it. We all make mistakes and I fancy the result

would have been just the same in any case. Sooner or later Tweedie would have found out about the money. Dick, am I not right?"

"You're entirely right, sir," replied Dick. "You see now that I was right, too. This thing had gone further than you were willing to believe."

"Oh, let's go back to the fort," murmured Jessie. "Let's go back right away."

"Why, my dear, we could no more reach Fort Fairfield in this storm than we could fly," her father replied. "Be calm. I am here to protect you, and Dick is a host in himself. Have you any sort of idea which way we are going, Dick? I should think you ought to have your bearings now."

"And so I have, sir," replied Dick, who had resumed the reins. "We are heading straight for No. 9. I've got the shore to guide me now and you may be very certain I shan't lose sight of it. Have no fears; we shall soon be at No. 9."

"And then?"

"We will not worry about the future."

"Right. You are a brave boy. I shall not forget this. Has Tweedie a team now or are the horses in some of the other camps?"

"He has two of them, sir. He can follow us up all right if he is so disposed."

"That's what I want to know. Well, we must make the best of it. I take it those fellows would have stolen the whole of the money and decamped, leaving the other boys in the lurch."

"That's what they would, sir; there's no doubt about that. I tried to warn you a year ago about Bill Tweedie, but you wouldn't listen. He's no better than a common thief and he would put a knife into a man for two cents."

"I wish I had listened," replied Mr. Bartlett, "but I felt that I could not afford it then. Tweedie is a great logger, one of the very best, but he does make trouble among the men."

They pushed on as rapidly as the jaded horse was able to carry them.

Dick was taking no more chances; he kept well in by the shore of the lake and so was able to keep his bearings all the way.

Trouble he knew was bound to come, but he felt that it was very doubtful if Tweedie would venture after them in the storm.

And it proved that he was quite right.

No. 9 came in sight at last and Dick soon had Mr. Bartlett and Jessie seated in front of a roaring fire, with the horse snugly housed in the little barn. Everything seemed so quiet and peaceful there in the hut that it was hard to realize that there was anything to fear.

The day passed without alarm.

It grew steadily warmer and by two o'clock the snow had turned to rain, which fell in torrents the remainder of the afternoon and on into the night.

Shortly after supper Jessie Bartlett retired to the room upstairs, Nibsey rolled himself up in his blankets and lay down by the fire and was soon fast asleep, but Mr. Bartlett and Dick remained talking until after midnight, for there was the treasurer's cash box to think of, which, by Dick's advice, had been hidden under a loose board in the floor.

"Do you give them up, Dick?" asked Mr. Bartlett at last. "I'm so sleepy that I can scarcely keep my eyes open. It seems to me that I would give anything for a nap."

"Take it," replied Dick. "I don't look for them before morning. The lake is one mass of slush. It's awful going and Tweedie has his wounded arm to think of."

"I think I'll risk it," replied Mr. Bartlett. "You keep watch for half an hour and then call me and I'll take my turn."

Thus saying Mr. Bartlett rolled himself up in his blankets and lay down beside Nibsey, using his leather grip for a pillow.

He was asleep in a moment, and, so far as the watch was concerned, Dick found himself alone.

For a long time Dick sat watching, listening to every sound.

He knew Bill Tweedie well and he felt absolutely certain that a visit from the enemy was sure to come, but at the end of an hour there was no alarm.

For the third time his head began nodding when all at once he was brought up standing by a very simple round.

It was just a low knock on the door, but remember, No. 9 was away up in the Aroostook wilderness, with the dense forest behind it, and, so far as Dick knew, there was no human being outside the hut for twenty miles, except the striking loggers of Loon Lake.

CHAPTER V.

THE DESCENT OF THE LOGGERS' GANG UPON THE HUT.

"Who's there?" demanded Dick. "Who's there?"

It had turned cold again and the rain had ceased about an hour before.

A strong northwest wind had sprung up and was now whistling down the chimney. Although Dick did not know it, the stars were out and the slush on the lake was freezing rapidly. Already it was strong enough to bear a skater. Such are the sudden changes of temperature away down in Maine.

"Is that you, Dick Fowler?" came the answer from outside the door.

"Who are you?" replied Dick. "Who's out there?"

He reached for his rifle and listened, but no second answer was returned.

"Mr. Bartlett! Mr. Bartlett!" called Dick.

But he got no answer here either. The treasurer was in a deep sleep and Nibsey was snoring in his usual style.

"Who can it be?" thought Dick. "If I open the door I may——"

"Dick! Hello, Dick!" came the call again. "Open the door!"

"Who in thunder are you? Why don't you answer?" shouted Dick, loud enough to wake up any ordinary person, but neither Mr. Bartlett nor Nibsey stirred.

"Wall, I'm Injun Joe, I guess," was the answer. "You orter know my voice, Dick."

"Joe! Are you alone?" called Dick, recognizing the voice of the young half-breed who belonged to the gang at No. 8.

"All alone. Open the door, will you? I've got something mighty important to tell you."

Dick lost no time in shooting the bolt, the door flew back and Dick stepped outside.

A tall, handsome young man, with dark skin and long straight black hair stood before him.

He was dressed in the usual style of the loggers and carried a rifle in his hand and a pair of skates slung over his shoulder.

"Oh, Dick, I've had such a time getting here," he said; "say, is it true that you've got Bartlett and his daughter here?"

"Yes. There's Mr. Bartlett asleep on the floor. Don't you see him?" replied Dick. "What's up, Joe. Have you heard what happened down at No. 1?"

"Well, you bet. We all know it up to No. 8. Come out here, Dick, I want to show you something. Come out quick!"

"What is it?"

"They are after you. Bill Tweedie and all the boys from No. 1 and No. 8 are coming up the lake. Don't you see 'em? Look! Come out to the edge of the bluff, then you will see."

Dick followed Indian Joe as he ran to the edge of the bluff, where there was a thick growth of hemlocks which certainly did obstruct the view, although they were a little to one side.

He had no reason to suspect treachery. On the contrary, he

believed Indian Joe to be his friend, for the half-breed was under deep obligations to him. Dick had once saved his life by dragging him out from under a fallen tree miles away from the camp, where he might have remained until he died by starvation if Dick had not gone out in search of him in a driving snowstorm, when every other one of the loggers in the camp refused to make a move.

The thought that Indian Joe might possibly betray him never entered Dick's head.

"Don't you see them? Don't you see them?" persisted Joe, pointing down the lake, but Dick could see nobody and he said so.

He was not looking in the direction of No. 8, however, but down toward No. 1.

"Why, they are there plain enough," persisted Joe. "I came on ahead to warn you. Better light out while there's time, Dick. Bill has sworn to cut your heart out if he lays hands on you and he'll do it, too."

"Then I don't leave here, that's certain," replied Dick. "Joe, will you stand by me?"

"Why, I'm standing by you now," laughed Joe, and he gave Dick a little push over against the hemlocks, upon which the bright firelight from the open door of the hut came streaming.

"Oh, you traitor! I didn't think it of you, Joe!" gasped Dick.

It was all he had the chance to say, for suddenly two men clutched him from behind the hemlocks.

His hands were pulled behind him and a handkerchief was thrust into his mouth. Indian Joe snatched his rifle away.

"Dick," he said, hurriedly, as the two loggers, whom Dick knew perfectly well as young fellows from No. 8, who had always been friendly to him, stood by, "Dick, don't you be down on me. I'm doing this for your own good. You saved my life and I mean to save you if I can."

Poor Dick could do nothing but stare at him.

He looked unutterable things, though, and if he could have spoken his mind it would not have been very pleasant listening for Indian Joe, who immediately ran down the bank to the lake, followed by his two companions.

Dick was in agony.

He turned and twisted, tried to force the handkerchief out of his mouth with his tongue, tried to work his hands free, but it was all no use.

His hands had been securely tied to the trunk of one of the hemlocks and his legs fastened the same way.

Dick was a helpless prisoner and unable to make a move toward warning Mr. Bartlett of his danger, but on the other hand he was half concealed among the hemlocks and while he could easily see through the branches all that was going on in the hut, he could not be seen himself by any one looking from the door.

What was going to happen next?

Naturally this was Dick's thought now, when he had to resign himself to the situation.

Suddenly he heard crunching sounds on the half frozen snow around the point in the direction of No. 8.

Dick was terrified beyond measure.

He knew perfectly well that many men wearing the lumberman's leggings drawn up over their big leather boots were coming up off the ice.

In a moment he could hear them pass through the hemlocks beyond him and the next he knew they were swarming about the door of the hut.

Bill Tweedie, with his arm in a sling, was in the lead. Ike Moon followed close behind him. Indian Joe was there, too, and also the two men who had done the tying.

Besides these Dick counted fourteen of the lumber gang men from No. 1 and No. 8.

"Thunder! The door is open!" exclaimed Tweedie. "Can they have sloped? By gaul, if I have to follow that Dick Fowler to the North Pole I'll do it to knife him! Wake up there, old Bartlett! Wake up! Say your prayers, you old snoozer, for your end has come."

CHAPTER VI.

BILL AND IKE SET THE HUT AFIRE.

Maine loggers are as rough a set of men as can be found anywhere in the United States.

Even the toughs of the territories can scarcely equal them. While things run smoothly they work well and are civil enough, but if they are once aroused and any man is unfortunate enough to excite their revengeful feelings that man had best beware.

But it was too late for Mr. Bartlett to beware.

Ike Moon and two others seized him without the slightest ceremony and stood him on his feet.

Two others caught Nibsey and tumbled him up in a style equally uncereemonious.

"Where's Dick Fowler?" demanded Bill Tweedie, putting a revolver at Nibsey's head. "Where is he? Speak or I'll blow you to blazes! Ha! Don't you hear me? Why don't you speak?"

"'Cause I don't know nawthin' about him," panted Nibsey.

Indian Joe and his two companions stood by and never said a word and in that moment Dick realized that he had more to thank them for than he had at first supposed, but he struggled with his bonds just the same and would have jumped in and stood by his friends in their trouble if he had been given the chance.

"You're a liar!" roared Tweedie. "I'll fix you in a moment. Bartlett, where's the dough? Where's the gal?"

"You'll never find out from me," retorted Mr. Bartlett, bravely. "Bill Tweedie, beware! There's law in the State of Maine for such as you, and——"

"To blazes with your law," broke in Tweedie. "The dough. Where is it? Speak out!"

"I'll never tell you. Never! Not if I die for it!"

Tweedie hauled off with his only available fist and struck Mr. Bartlett a blow between the eyes which sent him down upon the floor all in a heap.

"Gosh! You've killed him!" cried Ike Moon. "You blame fool! We'll stand a poor show to find the money now."

"Father! Oh! You have killed my father!"

Jessie came running downstairs fully dressed, screaming wildly.

She made a rush for the prostrate body of Mr. Bartlett, but one of the men caught her by the arm, and, slinging her around violently, kept her back.

"Take that squawling jay down to the sleighs," ordered Tweedie. "We are off for the provinces as soon as we find the money and we may as well take her along. She's always turned up her nose at me, but I've set my heart on her and I mean that she shall marry me just the same."

Dick's struggles were fearful as he saw Jessie dragged off screaming among the hemlocks, but it was no use—he could not burst his bonds.

"Is he dead?" demanded Tweedie of Ike Moon, who was bending over Mr. Bartlett.

"That's what he is," drawled Ike. "You've settled his hash, Bill. Say, it's going a shade too far. No good will come out of this."

"Dry up with your croaking. We'll set the hut afire and

who'll ever know? Nibsey, you know where that money was hid and you've got to tell or I'll put you in the fire, too."

"Gee! I don't know nawthin' about it!" howled the redoubtable Napoleon, Jr. "Say, Bill, I never done nawthin' to you. Why can't you leave a feller go?"

"Tell it!" roared Tweedle, pressing the revolver against Nibsey's forehead.

"Oh, take it away! Take it away!" bawled Nibsey, louder than ever. "I'll tell."

"You coward," thought Dick, but after all the poor boy, who was only a poor, ignorant fellow, could scarcely be blamed.

He led Bill Tweedle over to the corner and pointed out the loose board.

Dick groaned inwardly as he saw the cash box come out.

Ike Moon felt in Mr. Bartlett's pocket and got his keys.

Tweedle tried them in turn until he found one which fitted the cash box.

"Yes, the dough is here," he cried. "We are done now. Slide out, boys. We'll make for the provinces."

He stepped to the hearth, and, with his foot, kicked the blazing coals all over the floor, scattering them about the unconscious form of Mr. Bartlett.

Then, closing the door, he ran after the others through the hemlocks and disappeared.

If ever Dick Fowler prayed for deliverance it was then.

He tugged and strained at his bonds, but all to no purpose; they would not yield.

And as he struggled his eyes were fixed upon the hut.

A dense smoke was forcing its way through the chinks of the logs.

Every instant Dick expected to see the flames come bursting out, but what he did see later was something perhaps more startling still.

Suddenly the door of the hut flew open and Mr. Bartlett, bareheaded, came bursting out.

"Jessie! Jessie!" he shouted wildly. "Jessie! Where are you? Jessie! Jessie!"

He ran past Dick in plain sight of him, but never turning his head.

Dick tried his best to yell and did succeed in making certain inarticulate sounds loud enough to have been heard.

But Mr. Bartlett evidently heard nothing.

His eyes were fixed and staring, the expression of his face was that of a madman as he ran down the bank on to the lake shouting "Jessie! Jessie!" in that same monotonous tone.

Dick followed him with his eyes and as it was bright starlight he was able to watch him for a long distance until at last he disappeared in the gloom.

Even then Dick could hear his voice calling:

"Jessie! Jessie! Jessie!"

It died away in the distance and the smoke which had been pouring out of the hut was now followed by something worse.

Dick could hear a roaring sound inside and see the light streaming through the window.

The hut was all in flames a moment later. Dick could hear the frightened horse stamping in the barn and he was just wondering whether there was any chance for his escape, when suddenly a sound reached his ears which might mean more trouble or might mean relief.

It was the crunching of feet upon the snow.

Some one was coming up the hill.

Dick thought of Nibsey, but Nibsey had been hurried off with the loggers when they retreated from the hut and Dick knew him well enough to feel sure that he would not have the courage to make any violent effort to escape.

He listened.

The footsteps were just audible above the crackling of the

flames and after a moment more of suspense Indian Joe stepped out into view.

He was all alone; there was a long hunting knife in his hand. He looked at Dick in a peculiar manner which made the boy's blood run cold and then, reaching out his hand, pulled the handkerchief out of the poor boy's mouth.

"Well, Dick Fowler, I'm back again!" he exclaimed. "What have you got to say to me?"

"Joe!" gasped Dick. It was all he could say.

Joe raised the knife and held it over Dick's heart.

"I'm an Indian," he said slowly. "You hate me now, Dick Fowler, and the man who hates me is my enemy. We Indians are not like you whites. We kill our enemies and I could with one stroke of this knife kill you!"

CHAPTER VII.

INDIAN JOE PROVES HIMSELF A TRUE FRIEND.

If Dick Fowler had been a coward he would have shown it then, when Indian Joe stood facing him with the knife raised above his heart.

"You wouldn't kill me, Joe, would you?" he said quickly. "If there is any fellow in the camps who has stood your friend I am the one, and you know it, too."

"You are right," replied Joe. "I do know it. That's why I acted toward you to-night as I did. Dick Fowler, I had rather stick the knife into my own heart ten times over than to hurt one hair of your head, but you shall have your revenge on me if you want it. Oh, yes; you shall."

As he thus spoke Indian Joe, with several quick strokes of the knife, cut Dick free.

"There, take it, Dick! Take it!" he cried, extending the knife at the same time. "Kill me if you want to—I'll never say a word."

"Put up the knife," replied Dick. "Put it up, Joe. I am satisfied that you did not mean to do me any wrong."

"You have nothing against me, then?"

"Nothing."

"You believe I meant to do the right thing? That I acted for the best? Dick Fowler, you once saved my life and I'd die to save yours. That's an Indian every time!"

Joe was terribly excited. Dick understood him now and he quieted him with a few friendly words.

"I had to do it, Dick," explained Joe. "I just had to. You see, Bill Tweedle came to No. 8 and stirred the boys up. He swore he would kill you and he meant it. I knew you and I knew that when the attack was made you would jump in, hit or miss, so I got Paul Bates and Ned Tuell to join me and we came here to save you in the only way it could possibly be done."

"I guess that's right," replied Dick, sadly. "It's a bad job, Joe, but we can't stand here. We must get Mr. Bartlett's horse and sleigh out of the barn; then we'll talk further. I've got something more to say."

By this time the hut was all in flames and it seemed only a question of a few moments before the barn must catch fire, too.

The two boys jumped in and soon had the horse and sleigh safe.

They had scarcely accomplished this when the roof of the hut fell with a crash and a few minutes later the sides crumbled away and the barn began to blaze.

It was practically over now. Camp No. 9 was no more.

Meanwhile Dick and Indian Joe had been coming to an understanding.

Joe revealed the whole plot and informed Dick that the plan

was to strike down Loon Lake to the Madawaska River and thence down the river to the "Grand Falls," as they were called, which lay on the boundary line between Maine and New Brunswick.

"We can head 'em off if they are going that way, Joe," Dick declared.

"Of course we can."

"You know the old logging trail to the falls made five years ago, when they hauled that big lot of spruce below the falls?"

"Of course I do. I guess I'm the only man in the camp who does besides Bill Tweedie. It will save us six miles if we can cut across that way, but what can we do against that gang after we get there—that's the rub?"

"It's hard telling. The chances that we shall be able to do anything are mighty slim, I must admit, but I say we've got to make some move for Miss Jessie's sake."

"Yes, and for our own. Your money and mine has gone off in that cash box, Dick. Besides, there's all that belongs to the boys in No. 2, No. 3, No. 4, No. 5, No. 6 and No. 7. Not one of them was let into this deal, although they were all willing to go on the strike. That scoundrel Tweedie just took in enough to back him up and in spite of all his fine talk about the wrongs of the poor loggers, he is perfectly willing to rob them of their hard earned wages. That's the white man for you. No Indian would ever act like that."

It was a poor time to enter into a discussion about the respective merits of the red and white races, so Dick said nothing, but went on with his harnessing, for he was now hitching up preparatory to making a start.

"Shall I drive?" asked Joe.

"I wish you would. I'll get in the back seat."

"No; sit in here with me, Dick."

"What for? It will ride better the other way."

"It will ride all right. You will see. I want your company. I can't talk to you if you are back there."

Dick thought there was something in the wind, but he knew that Indian Joe had a peculiar way of expressing himself, so he said nothing, but got upon the seat beside him and tucked the blankets in, while Joe started down for the Carrying Place, when it would be necessary for them to turn off in order to get on the old wood trail.

The boys continued to discuss the situation until they reached the Carrying Place.

Just as Joe was about to turn up the creek two men armed with shotguns sprang out from among the hemlocks.

"Hello, Joe!" shouted one. "I see you have got Dick all right!"

It was Paul Bates and Ned Truell, the two loggers who had helped to capture Dick.

"Jump in, boys!" cried Joe. "Dick knows all now and he has nothing against you. We are off for Grand Falls to cut in ahead of Bill Tweedie's gang if we can."

Dick knew now why Indian Joe wanted the back seat left vacant.

The two young loggers lost no time in getting into the sleigh and Joe drove on up the creek.

"Did you see anything of Mr. Bartlett since you have been waiting here?" asked Dick, for Bates and Truell explained that they had given the gang the slip before they had gone very far down the lake, and, returning to the Carrying Place, had been waiting there ever since.

"Not a thing," replied Truell. "Mr. Bartlett never came this way."

"Where can he have gone?" thought Dick, growing more and more worried about the unfortunate man.

He listened intently as the sleigh flew on up the creek, half expecting to hear that despairing cry of "Jessie! Jessie!" but

the forest was absolutely silent until all at once the stillness was broken by a shout ahead.

"Hey, there! You are off the trail! You want to get back mighty quick if you ever expect to reach the camp."

Indian Joe reined in instantly.

"Lay low, boys!" he whispered. "Some one coming!"

Dick drew his revolver and Bates and Truell seized their guns.

"Can it be that Bill Tweedie changed his mind and turned in here, too?" breathed Dick.

"Hush!" answered the young half-breed, in a low voice. "Not a word! It may be friends or it may be enemies—we shall soon know."

CHAPTER VIII.

CAPTAIN DICK TAKES COMMAND.

Loud shouts were soon heard in the distance on ahead. Whips cracked and bells jingled and five great wood sleds, with ten men on each, standing up and holding onto the stakes, came into view.

"Hooray!" shouted Dick, "The new gang! We shall have all the help we want now!"

But Indian Joe did not altogether like it.

He would much rather have gone it alone, as he expressed it, but Dick did not see the situation from that point of view at all.

He shouted to the driver of the first sled, who happened to be a man whom he very well knew, one who regularly brought supplies from Fort Fairfield into the camp.

"Hello, Dick Fowler. That you?" cried the teamster. "What in the world are you doing here? Seen anything of Mr. Bartlett? He started in just before the storm with Miss Jessie and I have been a bit worried about him ever since."

Joe drove the sleigh up alongside the big sled and Dick hastily told his story, imploring the new loggers with all the eloquence he could muster to take hold and help.

The new men fell in with the proposition with great enthusiasm, and no wonder, for their winter's work was at stake.

The young captain of No. 9 was immediately chosen leader of the expedition.

Dick lost no time in making his arrangements then.

He divided the party into two. Half under the guidance of Ned Truell he sent back to the lumber camps on the lake with orders that they should proceed first to No. 1 and from there visit each camp in turn and try to find Mr. Bartlett. If they succeeded they were to assure the treasurer that every possible effort would be made to rescue Jessie and recover the money, but if they failed they were to take possession of camp No. 1 and wait for Dick's return.

The rest of the company joined in the search.

As soon as the other sleds had disappeared the remainder were turned and followed after Dick and Indian Joe down the old wood trail to Grand Falls.

Nothing occurred to prevent their progress.

Just after sunrise the whole party came out at the brow of a hill which overlooked the falls.

It was a beautiful sight.

On their left they could see the frozen surface of the Madawaska River extending back into the forest, while directly at their feet there was no ice, for the current was very rapid here under the hill.

A little further on the river dropped over a ledge of rocks

twenty feet high and went rushing over a mass of broken stones, all white with ice, now, while the banks on either side of the rapids looked as though they were carved out of crystal into a thousand fantastic forms, the result of the frozen spray.

Dick here ordered the sleds to be left in the woods and marshalled his force on the brow of the hill, under some tall, spreading hemlocks.

"There's no sight of them yet, boys," he said, "but they will come sooner or later. Make yourselves as comfortable here as you can, while Joe and I go up the river and see if we can't locate them."

This was agreed to.

Dick's orders were that no fire should be lighted, but that they might make the best breakfast they could out of such provisions as they had with them that did not require cooking.

Then he and Indian Joe climbed down the hill and prepared for business.

The surface of the ice was as smooth as glass, owing to the recent rain.

The two young loggers put on their skates and started up the river, keeping as close to the bank as possible, where the overhanging trees would to a certain extent prevent them from being seen.

They skated along up two miles and more, but saw nothing of the loggers, until at last they came to a point where an old wood road was intercepted by the river.

Taken in either direction this road led around Grand Falls and across the line into New Brunswick.

There was another such road lower down, close to the hill, where the men had been left.

Dick assumed that Bill Tweedie would probably select the lower road, because it was the most direct to the lumber camps on the St. John River, but he now saw at a glance that he was mistaken, for here were the sleigh tracks turning off to the left. Followed in this direction this trail was a short cut into the lower road, joining it at a point just back of the hill, where the men had been left.

"There you are, Dick!" cried Indian Joe. "We have gone too far. Bill Tweedie has cut in by the upper trail. And I think that the gang have struck in for Tweedie's old stamping ground, the Brewster camp. You know it lies about a mile in here."

"I've heard of it. Think they'll stop there?"

"I'm almost sure of it. You see, Dick, these fellows have been without sleep all night and before they start in on the long run to the Canuck camps they will naturally want some rest. You may depend upon it that's what this cutting into the woods means. It's mighty fortunate that we caught on to it or we might have waited forever for them to come down to the falls."

Dick sat down and began to take off his skates.

"What's the programme?" asked Indian Joe. "Do you mean to go on to the old Brewster camp?"

"I do and I'm going now," replied Dick, decidedly, "but I want you to go back."

Joe stood aghast.

"Dick," he said, slowly, "you are making a mistake. Bill Tweedie will kill you sure if he lays his hands on you. You had better come with me."

"That's all right," replied Dick, as he flung his skates over his shoulder. "You acknowledge me as captain of this expedition, Joe?"

"Most certainly I do. That's understood."

"Then go. I order it. As for myself, I am going into the old Brewster camp and I am determined to go it alone."

CHAPTER IX.

GOING IT ALONE.

Indian Joe turned and left Dick without another word.

Dick watched him for a few moments as he went skimming down the river and then turned into the wood road and went tramping along over the snow.

He had about half covered the distance to the camp when he suddenly perceived a figure coming toward him, all bundled up in logger's cap and big comfortable.

"Nibsey!" exclaimed Dick.

He gave a peculiar cry, which was a private signal between Nibsey and himself.

The shout which came back told Dick instantly that the boy who was now running toward him as fast as he could get over the snow was coming as a friend and not as an enemy.

"Oh, Dick! Oh, Dick," he kept calling out, and he came up all out of breath.

Dick caught the redoubtable Napoleon by the shoulder and gave him a good shake.

"Say something besides, 'Oh, Dick!' confound you!" he exclaimed. "What in the mischief did you want to give away the secret of the money for?"

"Now don't, Dick. Don't say nothing," whined Nibsey. "I know I am to blame, but Bill Tweedie was so thundering fierce I thought sure he would kill me. I couldn't help it, Dick, and you went and run away yourself and that's worse—now you know you did."

It was time for a little explanation on Dick's side and he told Nibsey the whole story a little later on.

But first he had questions to ask, of course, and most important of all was to find out if Tweedie and his gang were in camp.

"Why, yes, they are there," said Nibsey. "They are all as drunk as owls in the old Brewster camp and were raising the very old Cain when I left."

"Where is Miss Jessie?" asked Dick, anxiously.

"Oh, she's upstairs in the loft. Bill put her there and said he'd shoot any feller that bothered her. Dick, she's a brave one. She told him to his face what he was and she has never made a whimper, not one. I believe Bill Tweedie is afraid of her, that's what I think."

"How about the money?"

"I know where it is hid," replied Nibsey, wisely. "I saw him put it in the chimbley, Dick."

"In the chimney!"

"Yes. He did it on the sly, while the fellers was drinking. They've got a big five gallon jug of rum and you bet they are getting full all right. I believe it's just a put-up job and that Bill means to get them all drunk first and then slope with the money and the girl. They got too lively to pay much attention to me, so soon as ever I saw my chance I just lit out and made up my mind I'd strike back toward No. 9, and see if I couldn't find out what had become of you."

All this time the boys were hurrying on over the wood road, Nibsey seeming to take it for granted that he had got to go back, now that he had found Dick.

"What are you going to do?" he asked. "What's your game, Dick?"

"I'm going to rescue Miss Jessie for one thing and I'm going to get that money for another," replied Dick, "but just how I'm going to manage it I don't know. Is there any guard outside the hut?"

"No, there isn't. It's too blame cold for any of them roosters to stop outside when there's fire inside, you bet; besides, they

don't look for no one to follow 'em up. They hain't got no such idea."

"Do you think we could get on the roof of the hut?"

"Why, I s'pose so."

"Do you think you could let me down that chimney at the end of a rope?"

"Gee! You wouldn't try a thing like that, Dick?"

"Well, that's my game if I can work it," said Dick. "Let's hurry. I'm wild to know what can be done."

"You had better hold on till those new fellers come to help you," remarked Nibsey, as they drew near the camp, for by this time Dick had told him all that had happened since they parted at No. 9.

But Dick had no notion of doing anything of the sort.

As they approached the camp he saw that there was but little smoke coming out of the chimney of the main hut of the group, which Nibsey said was the one where the loggers were.

The boys slipped into the woods and waited for a few moments, while Dick took in the camp.

"If we could only get a ladder we might easily manage to get on the roof," he said. "Once we are up there I don't see what's to hinder us from opening that scuttle and showing Jessie the way out."

"Mebbe there's a ladder in the barn," suggested Nibsey.

"We'll go and see," replied Dick. He stopped for a moment to look up at the thickly wooded hill behind the camp, for he knew that his men were on the other side of it, or, perhaps, even then crossing the top, and he and Nibsey stole toward the barn, making as little noise as possible.

The horses of the gang were tied up in the stalls, but there was no one watching them. Standing over in one corner Dick saw a short ladder, which was just what he wanted, and there was plenty of rope lying around.

"Get it over there behind the hut, Nibsey," said Dick. "I'm going to make a try for it, but I want to have a peep into the hut first."

This was a far more risky piece of business than Nibsey's job of placing the ladder, but Dick did not hesitate. The open space between the barn and the hut was just a mass of frozen slush and it was impossible to avoid making some noise.

Dick's hand was on his revolver as he stole over to the hut and crouched under the window.

Once he was in position he waited motionless for a few moments, and, hearing no other sound than Nibsey's footsteps as he crossed over to the back of the hut with the ladder, he raised his head suddenly and shot one quick glance in through the window.

There was nothing to fear. The sight which met Dick's eyes was one pretty familiar to him from his long experience in logging camps.

The strikers lay scattered over the floor in every conceivable position, all sound asleep.

Some were wrapped in blankets, some were just as they had fallen. On the table was the rum jug and half a dozen tin cups. Bill Tweedie was sitting on a stool with his head resting on his arms, which were sprawled out over the table. To all appearance he was as sound asleep as the rest.

Dick slipped around back of the hut, where Nibsey had already placed the ladder.

"Now is our chance," he whispered. "They are all dead drunk inside, just as you said, and unless Bill Tweedie is shamming he is as bad as the rest."

"Are you going to try it, then?" asked Nibsey.

"You bet I am. If there is any way of opening that scuttle without bringing the house down I'll have Miss Jessie out on this ladder in no time—hush! What was that?"

Suddenly there came a loud crash inside the hut and a voice shouted. "Wake up, there, you drunken snozers! Wake up!"

"Gee! We are in for it now!" gasped Nibsey. "That's Bill Tweedie! He's going on the rampage sure!"

CHAPTER X.

THE RESCUE OF JESSIE.

"Hold up, Nibsey—there's going to be trouble. We had better wait," whispered Dick, as the noises inside the hut continued to be heard.

"We had better light out—that's what we had better do," breathed Nibsey. "Bill Tweedie will knife you if he catches you, Dick, just as sure as fate."

"I'm not afraid of him."

"Nobody said you were, but a fellow may as well be on the safe side."

"Hush! Keep quiet! Wait a minute!"

They stood listening. The noises ceased and all grew perfectly still inside the hut.

Still if Dick had dared to look in at the window he would have seen something that might have made him determine that it was rather unwise to attempt to "go it alone."

Bill Tweedie was wide awake, sitting by the table with a glass of rum before him.

He was certainly drunk, but he knew perfectly well what he was about.

He had called to the sleeping loggers several times to see if he could arouse them, but not one stirred.

This was just the way Bill Tweedie wanted it. It was he who had provided the rum and he had made his companions drunk for a purpose.

"Guess it's all right now," he muttered, thickly. "I've got them snoozers where I want 'em. If they think I'm going to whack up with them they are most mighty mistaken. Ha! Ha! When I took the gal along they felt safe, for they knew I couldn't light out with her. Dang fools! They never guessed it was only a bluff. I'll have another drink after I get through with this and then I'll light out. The feller what lays a hand on a dollar of that money will have to get up pretty early in the morning, you bet."

He was in no hurry, for he knew the men would not awake for hours.

He drank his rum, and pouring out another glass, sat staring at the dying fire half asleep.

Meanwhile Dick was working. He expected trouble and was prepared to act promptly when it came, but the young captain of No. 9 was not the kind of fellow to let any fear of trouble hold him back.

"It's all quiet, Nibsey," he whispered. "Now listen to me."

"I'm a-listening, Dick."

"If Bill Tweedie comes out you just cut and run—do you understand?"

"I'm blamed if I will! And leave you! Oh, no!"

"You must. Make right up the hill and holler as loud as ever you can, 'Come on, boys! Come on! Here they are!'"

"What for—a bluff?"

"Partly. I expect Indian Joe and his crowd any moment now. It won't do any harm to let them know there's something in the wind."

"Better wait till they come, Dick."

"No; I'm going to act now and take my chances. You do just as I tell you."

"You are not going to try to get down the chimney, Dick?"

"I don't know. I'll see. Probably not, but we mustn't talk any more. You have got your orders, Nibsey, obey them—that's all. Here goes."

Dick ran noiselessly up the ladder. We may not have mentioned that he wore heavy woollen stockings pulled over his boots after the style of the Maine loggers.

This made his footsteps absolutely noiseless and also greatly aided him in walking on the shingle roof, which was not very steep.

Once on the roof Dick crept toward the scuttle, which was only a few feet up from the eaves. He softly raised it, for it was not fastened down to the frame, and, without the slightest hesitation, threw it down into the snow, where it landed without making a sound.

A faint exclamation reached him as soon as he raised the scuttle. Dick put his head through the opening instantly and saw Jessie Bartlett standing underneath staring up at him.

"Oh, Dick!" she whispered. "Oh, Dick! I knew you would come!"

"Hush!" breathed Dick, putting his finger to his lips. "Don't say a word. Don't make a sound. If you have got the courage to do just as I tell you I'll have you out of here in two minutes."

Jessie nodded assent in a manner so emphatic as to leave no doubt that she was willing to take any risk.

"Is the trapdoor fastened on the under side?" whispered Dick. Another nod.

"That's all right, then. Take that table and, just as quietly as you can, put it under the scuttle here; then climb up on it and I'll lend you a hand to get out on the roof."

Jessie obeyed and did it so cautiously that she managed to get upon the table without a sound.

"Now, then, be careful," whispered Dick. "I'll pull you up and you can manage to stand on the roof for a moment if you hold on to me. Then you must crouch down, get hold of the scuttle frame and let your feet slide down over the roof onto the ladder. Feel for the top round. I'll hold your shoulders and you can't get away from me—can you do all that?"

Jessie nodded. "You needn't be afraid of me and you needn't hold on to me," she whispered. "I'm a good climber. I can do it better alone."

She proved as good as her word. Dick could not have let himself down upon the ladder more skillfully than she did.

A moment later and she had descended safely to the ground.

Dick prepared to follow, but he stopped for a moment to look down the chimney, for he hated to go away and leave the money behind him, now that he knew where it was.

But he saw at a glance that it was out of the question to hope to get down the chimney, for the flue was entirely too small.

"I've done half the job, anyhow," he thought, "and I will do the other half when Joe comes with the men."

He then slid down to the ladder and descended to the ground.

"Hooray!" whispered Nibsey. "By gracious, you have done it, Dick."

"Told you I would," replied Dick. "We must light out now. I want to put you where you will be safe, Miss Jessie, then I'll come back and do the rest."

"The money is there, Dick. They put it in the chimney," Jessie said.

"I know it. Nibsey told me."

"Where is my father? Is he safe?"

Dick turned the question.

"We'll talk about that later," he said. "Nibsey, you go with Miss Jessie down the road. I will start up the hill after Joe."

"No, you won't! You won't stir a step!" cried a voice behind them.

Dick wheeled around, and, to his horror, saw Bill Tweedie suddenly spring around the corner of the hut.

"Now I've got you, Dick Fowler!" he hissed, whipping out a long knife and making a rush at the captain of No. 9.

CHAPTER XI.

DICK TAKES A LONG STEP AHEAD.

Jessie screamed. Nibsey gave one of his roars, and, rushing on Bill Tweedie, caught him by the coattail and began beating him about the back.

But Dick did not need any help, and he did not use his revolver either.

As the big logger came for him Dick just gave him one between the eyes, and, dodging the descending knife, caught Tweedie by the wrist and wrenched it away.

In a twinkling he had the fellow on his back in the snow.

Then Dick was able to use the revolver to some purpose. He whipped it out, and covering Tweedie, sternly ordered him to rise.

Tweedie scrambled up and made another dash at Dick the instant he got on his feet, trying at the same time to seize the revolver.

He got it, too, but not in the way he thought for.

Dick struck him a stinging blow with the butt which sent him back on the snow again and settled his case at the same time.

When the bumptious Bill got on his feet a second time he was as meek as a lamb.

"You're too much for me, Dick Fowler," he snarled, "but if I hadn't been lushing you wouldn't have done it so easy. That's what. My time will come yet, that's what it will."

"Mine has come already," laughed Dick. "I want Mr. Bartlett's cash box, Bill."

"I don't know nothing about no cash box," growled Tweedie. He was covered with the revolver and did not dare to make a move.

"You'd better find out then mighty quick," retorted Dick. "It was in the chimney at last accounts."

"Well, if you think you can find it go and look for it."

"That's just what I'm not going to do, for I'm satisfied it isn't there now. Yank over, Bill. By gracious, if you don't I'll make this little barker talk and I want you to take notice that it's pointing right at your head."

"You wouldn't shoot me, Dick Fowler. You wouldn't dare."

"Don't tempt me too far, Bill, or you will find out whether I dare or not. The box. Where is the box?"

"You'll find it lying in the snow around the other side of the hut," growled Bill. "I'm all done. May as well go the whole hog, I suppose."

"Nibsey, run and get it!" ordered Dick. "Here, Jessie, you take the revolver. Keep it just so and fire if he makes a move."

"I'll do it," said Jessie, "and I'm not afraid to fire, either, as he'll find out if he tries any tricks."

Then Dick found a use for his rope, for he tied Bill Tweedie's hands securely behind him.

The drunken bully offered no resistance, for the fight was all gone out of him.

By the time Dick had finished Nibsey came running up with the cash box in his hand and at the same instant a loud shout was heard behind the barn and the new loggers, led by Indian Joe, came running into the deserted camp.

"By gracious, you've got him, Dick!" cried Joe. "Miss Jessie, too! Well, this is going it alone with a vengeance! How about the cash?"

"Here it is!" shouted Nibsey, waving the box.

The work was done and well done, and the young captain of No. 9 had done it alone.

As for the rest, we may tell it in a few words.

As the strikers in the hut were too sound asleep to be disturbed by all that was going on outside, Dick ordered that they be left just where they were.

The horses were harnessed into the sleighs and those who could find accommodations drove out of the camp, the rest following on foot.

Reaching the Madawaska, Dick left the new loggers in care of Indian Joe, with orders to guide them up to No. 1, where several new huts had been recently finished and were ready to receive them.

Three of the men Dick kept with him. These took Bill Tweedie in one sleigh and Dick Nibsey and Jessie in the other.

Dick had settled the fate of the prisoner off hand. He ordered the men, one of whom was a very intelligent and reliable fellow, to drive straight to Fort Fairfield and deliver Bill up to the authorities and at the same time telegraph to Bangor and inform the lumber company what had occurred and request that some one be sent down at once to look after the logging camps.

The two sleighs kept together until they came to the place where it was necessary to turn off to No. 1, where Dick, Jessie and Nibsey went, taking possession of Bill Tweedie's hut.

Now we have dwelt upon all these things in detail, because the events of those two days brought a marked change in the fortunes of the captain of No. 9.

Two days passed and then the secret agent of the Loon Lake Lumber Company came flying into camp.

Thanks to Dick, he found everything quiet and work proceeding as usual, although nothing had been heard of Mr. Bartlett.

Indian Joe, with a company of men, had searched the woods in every direction for the missing man, finding no trace of him.

It was a sad blow to Jessie, but she bore it bravely.

"I shall never leave here until we learn his fate, Dick," she declared. "My mother is dead and my father is all I have in the world. The search must continue. I will pay all expenses and as long as Indian Joe's patience holds out mine will. I shall never rest until I know the truth."

The day after the arrival of the secretary the logging camps were visited and every man was paid in full, for the secretary brought with him a further supply of cash.

This put an end to the trouble. Nothing had been heard of the drunken strikers and it was supposed that they must have passed over into the provinces. At all events, they never showed themselves in the Loon Lake camps again.

As for Bill Tweedie, he was now jailed in Bangor awaiting his trial for robbery and arson.

The secretary declared that it was the intention of the company to spare no expense necessary to secure a conviction and send the fellow to the penitentiary for a term of years.

"And now, Dick, who is to take charge up here?" asked Mr. Rolfs, the secretary, as he was returning to No. 1 after paying off the last logger while Dick was driving the sleigh down Loon Lake.

"Well, that's for the company to say, sir," replied Dick. "What interests me most is to get things started up again at No. 9."

"You are wrong, Dick," replied Mr. Rolfs. "What interests you is the very matter I am talking about, for the company has left it to me to decide who shall take charge of our interests here."

Dick's heart gave a big jump.

He had never thought of anything like this for a moment, but, of course, he knew what Mr. Rolfs meant.

"And have you picked out a man, sir?" he asked.

"That's what I have," was the reply. "I've picked out a young man named Dick Fowler. He used to be captain of No. 9, but now, if you have no objection, he is to be made boss of all the camps."

CHAPTER XII.

THE CRY IN THE STORM.

Nibsey went fairly wild when he heard of Dick's good fortune, and, in fact, there was scarcely a logger in the camp who was not pleased to see the captain of No. 9 promoted to Bill Tweedie's place.

Dick, however, bore his honors modestly. He was a smart boy and all business.

Now that he had been promoted his one ambition was to make the biggest cut in the Loon Lake camps that the company had ever made, and he succeeded, of course, for he had more men at his command than had ever been working there before, but the number of feet of lumber cut to each man was also greater than it had ever been.

The winter wore away and spring was now close at hand.

The time had almost come when the ice would break up and the big log rafts make their start down the lake and thence by way of the Madawaska and St. John Rivers find their way to tide water.

One evening in the latter part of March Dick, with Nibsey and Indian Joe, having just finished their work on the ice, started to return to the big hut at No. 1, where they now lived, cared for by Mrs. Martin, a respectable, energetic widow, who had come up from Bangor shortly after Dick's promotion, to keep Jessie company, for the devoted girl still remained in the camp, hoping against hope that she might gain some intelligence of her father's fate, although the search for the unfortunate man had long since been given up.

"It looks to me," remarked Indian Joe, "as though we were likely to have a break up to-night. If it comes off to rain we surely will and I shan't be sorry to see it come."

"You bet I won't," replied Dick. "We are all ready for it; there's very little left to do."

"Biggest old cut that was ever made on Loon Lake!" cried Nibsey, just as proud of it as though it had been his work.

"It's a good one," said Joe. "This ought to put the company right on its feet again, and if it does, Dick, you'll be a big man with the loggers for the rest of your life."

The prospect was certainly good for the fulfillment of Indian Joe's prophecy.

The surface of Loon Lake almost as far as you could see was strewn with logs, which, under Dick's direction, had been hauled out of the woods by the strong ox teams and dropped on the ice.

The cut of pine and hemlock had been good in all the camps, but for clear spruce timber No. 9 took the lead. Dick had rebuilt the hut and a big gang had been at work for weeks cutting out his carefully marked trees.

These were all on the ice now with the others. Huge tree trunks were scattered all over the surface of the lake.

For weeks it had been the work of Dick, Nibsey, Indian Joe and others to lash these logs together and make them up into great rafts.

Away down at the outlet of the lake a huge log boom was in position to prevent the rafts from passing into the Madawaska until Dick was ready to let them.

All that was necessary was to have a good rain to break up the rotting ice and the rafts would be in the water ready for business.

Dick would then be a captain in more senses than one, for it was to be his work to pilot the fleet of rafts down the river to St. John and on the forward raft—the one lying nearest the boom—a comfortable hut had been built, where Dick expected to live, with Nibsey and Joe, for several weeks.

Indian Joe's prediction proved quite correct.

The rain began about nine o'clock and fell in torrents all through the night.

Ready with their long logging poles, shod at the ends with a steel prod, the boys took refuge in a little shelter on the lake shore and remained on the watch as the hours dragged on.

It was the captain's business to be on hand when the ice broke up, for there was no telling what turn affairs might take.

Joe slept the first part of the night lying right down on the floor wrapped up in his blankets, while Dick and Nibsey kept watch.

At one o'clock Dick called the half-breed and Nibsey turned in. As for Dick himself, he had no intention of lying down at all.

At half-past two, the ice still holding its own, Joe volunteered to go up the lake for some little distance and take a look at matters there.

After he left Dick went out on the shore, and, paying no attention to the rain, stood peering off on the lake, listening attentively, for, with his accustomed ears, he knew he would be able to detect the first sound of the breaking up of the ice.

There were all sorts of strange sounds to be heard in the forest that night, as there always is in a heavy storm.

There was the creaking of the big hemlock branches, the ceaseless patter of the rain upon the ice and every now and then strange animal cries were heard.

Once Dick heard the bellow of a buck moose; again it was the cry of a "bob cat" or the mournful shriek of the "Indian devil," a species of jackal, common to the forests of Maine.

Suddenly Dick heard a sound behind him different from the rest. It was a light footstep in the melting snow and he turned to see Jessie all bundled up in a heavy waterproof cape coming toward him through the rain.

"Dick, is the ice really going to break up to-night?" she asked, in her quiet way.

"Why, Jessie! How could you ever think of exposing yourself on a night like this!" exclaimed Dick. "I never dreamed but what you were sound asleep in bed."

"I can't sleep, Dick. It is no use trying. I keep hearing father's voice ringing in my ears."

"That's only fancy."

"I know it. But it seems real to me. Dick, do you think the ice will go?"

"I'm sure of it, Jessie. It may hold off until morning, but it is bound to go soon."

"Do you think if it does go and—and my father's body is in the snow anywhere along the shore that it will be stopped by the boom? That's what is worrying me, Dick."

"I'm afraid it will pass under the boom, Jessie. I hate to say it, but I may as well tell you the truth."

"I suppose it is so. Oh, Dick, if some watch could only be set at the boom. I know you need every man now, but——"

"Why, I've done it already," cried Dick. "Paul Bates and Ned Truell are down there now. I've charged them to keep a sharp lookout."

"Thank you, Dick. Thank you a thousand times. I might have known you would not forget."

"Just as though I could forget," replied Dick. "But come, Jessie, you must get inside the shelter. If you want to stay here you can, but you really mustn't stay out in the rain."

"Hark! What was that?" cried Jessie, seizing Dick's arm, for a strange cry had suddenly sounded above the storm.

"It beats me! That's a new one!" exclaimed Dick, "Sounded like a man's voice, too. It must be Joe."

It was a man's voice calling.

"Jessie! Jessie! Jessie!"

There was no mistake about it. Those were the words.

"It's father!" screamed Jessie. "It's father! Oh, Dick!"

CHAPTER XIII.

IS THIS MAN MAD?

"Impossible! It cannot be Mr. Bartlett!" Dick exclaimed.

"Jessie! Jessie! Jessie!" came the cry again from off on the ice.

"Dick, it certainly is my father's voice," said Jessie, speaking in that calm way that always came over her in times of trouble. "I cannot mistake it. I should know father's voice anywhere. What is to be done?"

Dick himself was convinced.

He had not forgotten the night of Bill Tweedie's attack when the treasurer ran down upon the lake calling "Jessie! Jessie!" just as the voice was calling now.

"Where in the world can he have been all these weeks!" he exclaimed. "Still it certainly does seem as if it must be your father and if it is some one must go out on the ice after him, that's sure."

"It is as much as one's life is worth, I suppose, Dick?"

"Indeed it is, but that won't hinder me. I'll get the big lantern and start right out."

"Wait," said Jessie. "I don't want you to risk your life, Dick. I'll call. Perhaps he will hear and come this way."

"Impossible. He can't hear with the wind against you."

"I'll try it, anyhow. Father! Father! Father!" Jessie screamed.

There was no answer.

"Mr. Bartlett! Mr. Bartlett! This way, sir!" yelled Dick. "This way! This way! Holler to us if you hear!"

They waited listening, but there was no other sound than the rattle of the rain on the roof of the shelter and the howling of the wind through the forest.

"He don't hear us," said Dick. "I knew it was no use to try to make him. There's something strange about this very strange."

Jessie shuddered.

"You don't think there can be any mistake about it, Dick?" she said. "I heard the cry distinctly—so did you."

At the same instant they heard it again, this time further down the river.

"Jessie! Jessie! Jessie!" much fainter than before.

"He's moving down toward the boom," said Dick.

"And every step he takes in that direction increases his danger?"

"It does."

"So I thought. Dick, give me the lantern."

"No, no! You go back to the house, Jessie. I'm going to start now."

"Don't, Dick. I don't want you to run any risk on my account. I know what it means to go on the ice to-night."

"Just as though I would let you go," cried Dick. "Go back, Jessie. Go right back to the house. The moment you make a start I'm off. If that is really Mr. Bartlett I shall find him and bring him ashore."

"May heaven bless you, Dick. I don't believe there is a braver fellow in the State of Maine than you."

Dick had pulled on his rubber coat and got his logging pole. He threw it over his shoulder, and, taking the big lantern, which was inclosed in a hard rubber case so as to be rain-proof, started down the bank, for Jessie, as she thus exclaimed, turned and walked toward the house.

The young captain of No. 9 was at his old work again, taking big chances for the sake of others.

Dick was a brave fellow and no mistake, for we do not exaggerate one bit when we say that of all the men in the different camps, with the possible exception of Indian Joe, there was not one who would have dared to venture on Loon Lake that night.

Yet the ice seemed firm enough as Dick waded through the slush, which came up over the instep of his rubber boots. There was no cracking, nor did it bend beneath his feet.

But this did not deceive him a bit. He knew that the ice was thoroughly rotten and that the water underneath being on the move, was making matters worse every moment. Still he walked boldly on, treading as lightly as possible and expecting every moment to strike a place where the ice would bend beneath him.

"Jessie! Jessie! Jessie!"

Once more the cry came on the wind, this time sounding nearer and off on the right more toward the opposite shore of the lake.

"Mr. Bartlett! Mr. Bartlett!" yelled Dick. "This way, sir. This way."

This time there was an answer, but it came in a form which made Dick's blood run cold.

A wild laugh came back on the wind.

"Ha! Ha! Ha! I hear Satan calling me," were the words. "Ho! Ho! Ho!"

"He's mad!" flashed over Dick. "If it is Mr. Bartlett he's lost his senses. Hello! What was that? I thought I heard some one behind me. By gracious, there is some one, too!"

He stopped and looked back, flashing his lantern toward the shore.

"Good heavens! It's Jessie!" he exclaimed, for there she was hurrying toward him through the slush.

"I couldn't let you go alone, Dick!" she called out as she approached. "Don't tell me to go back, for I won't go. It's not right that you should run all the risk."

"Oh, Jessie, you ought not to have done it!" cried Dick. "You don't know the danger. This is no place for you."

"It is because I do know the danger that I am here," replied Jessie. "Don't send me back, Dick. Do you suppose I could sit quietly in the house and let you run the risk alone? We will take our chances together whatever comes."

It was of no use to say anything, so Dick pushed on, Jessie keeping close by his side.

"You heard, Dick?" she said.

"That laugh? Oh, yes."

"Wasn't it dreadful. It was a madman's laugh, Dick."

"That's what it was."

"Poor father. Oh, how he must have suffered! Don't say anything, Dick. I am prepared for the worst, but it's everything to know that he is still alive."

"I'll call again," said Dick. "He certainly heard me that last time. If we can only attract his attention and bring him this way the rest will be easy enough."

He had scarcely spoken when a noise like the report of a cannon startled them both.

"Oh, what was that?" cried Jessie, clutching Dick's arm. "You heard?"

"It's the ice."

"Breaking up?"

"It's the beginning of it. You had better go back."

"No, no! I won't go back. Call again, Dick. Call again."

"Mr. Bartlett! Mr. Bartlett!" shouted Dick.

"Hello! Hello! I hear. Ha! Ha! Ha! I hear, but you don't get me!" came the answer, so near that it startled them both.

"There he is! There he is!" cried Jessie, suddenly. "Father! Father!"

About twenty yards away from them Dick caught sight of the dark figure of a man running swiftly over the ice.

"Father! This way! It's Jessie! Here I am!" the poor girl screamed.

The same diabolical laugh was the only answer and the figure sprinted away faster than ever.

All in the same instant another thunderous report rang out, followed by a crashing sound and a great stretch of water opened directly in front of them, while the broken ice cakes began piling up ahead.

"Ha! Ha! Ha! You can't get me now!" shouted the man, stopping and looking back.

The light of the lantern struck full upon him and Dick recognized Mr. Bartlett instantly.

"Father! Father!" screamed Jessie, and she started to run straight for the open water.

There is no telling what would have happened if Dick had not caught her by the arm and held her back.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BREAK-UP OF THE ICE.

"Oh, let me go, Dick! Let me go! I can jump across!" cried Jessie, wild with excitement now.

"No, no! It is impossible. We must go back!" replied Dick, keeping a tight hold. "See, he is going toward the other side of the lake. No doubt he will reach the shore all right and I am not going to let you sacrifice your life."

It would have been mere madness to attempt to jump the break, which was fifteen feet in width at the very least.

Laughing in that same wild way and without having paid any particular attention to Dick and Jessie, Mr. Bartlett ran on over the ice and soon disappeared in the gloom.

But Dick had been able to get a good look at him. There could be little doubt that the treasurer of the Loon Lake Lumber Company had gone mad.

His hair had grown long and hung down over his shoulders. His clothes were all in rags and instead of the new ulster that he had worn on the night he disappeared he now had an old horse blanket thrown over his shoulders, which trailed on the ice behind him as he ran away from the break.

Jessie recovered her calmness in a moment.

"Oh, Dick! Can nothing be done?" she asked.

"Nothing now. The ice is breaking up. If we want to save our lives we must get back," was the reply.

"Then let us go," said Jessie. "Let us go now."

Dick still kept hold of her arm, and, turning hurriedly, retraced his steps.

Matters were becoming very serious. All around them the cracking sounds could now be heard and the ice began to bend beneath their feet as they walked on.

Every moment or two they were obliged to turn aside to avoid some one of the big log rafts. Dick felt that it would have been safer to take up their position on one of these and wait for the ice to go, but that meant trouble of another kind and it was as much as Jessie's life was worth to be exposed all night in the rain, even if the boom would hold the rafts until morning, which was by no means certain.

So Dick determined to push on and make the shore if possible.

"If I can only get Jessie back to the house," he thought, "then I shall be free to act."

And it was very necessary that he should be free. Now was the time that the boom needed all the care that could be given it, for the success of the whole winter's work depended upon the way in which Dick managed his affairs that night.

"I ought to be at the boom now," thought Dick. "What in the world shall I do if anything happens there?"

But he did not show his anxiety to Jessie; on the contrary, he spoke as encouragingly as possible.

"We shall get ashore all right," he kept saying. "I'll send a gang over across the lake the very first thing in the morning and there will be no let up till your father is found."

"Let me manage it, Dick," said Jessie. "You have got the rafts to look after. I understand the situation. You can't leave them now."

"That will be all right; leave it to me," said Dick. "There is time enough for it all. Hello! There goes Joe!"

"Dick! Dick! Hello, Dick! Where are you?" a voice shouted through the gloom.

"Out here on the ice. Hello, Joe!" was Dick's answer.

"Out on the ice! For heaven's sake what are you doing there? Don't you know it's breaking up? Get in just as quick as ever you can!" yelled Joe.

"That's all right. I'm a-coming," shouted Dick, when all at once another cannon-like report came and the ice parted right in front of them.

"We are lost!" screamed Jessie. "It's all going to pieces now!"

There was a crash and a big raft, which lay on their right, dropped into the water.

Dick was in despair. He was hurrying Jessie toward the raft when it went down, carrying everything before it.

The ice now began breaking up in every direction.

"Dick! Dick! Are you there?" shouted Joe.

"On the ice still," shouted Dick. "Get out the boat, Joe. Jessie is with me here."

Joe gave an unintelligible shout in answer, the words being drowned by the cracking of the ice all around them.

"Back!" cried Dick. "We must get back. There is another raft on our left. If we can only get on it we are safe."

They ran for their lives.

Just as they came in sight of the raft the ice crumbled beneath it and the logs, dropping into the water, swung around, breaking up the ice ahead.

Dick came to a halt, all uncertain what to do.

"This means death," said Jessie, quietly. "Oh, Dick! I am so sorry I let you come!"

"Hush! Don't say a word! Here comes that other raft! I can get it!" cried Dick. "Stand where you are. On no account move till I give the word."

He ran to the edge of the ice, and, setting down his lantern, grasped his logging pole firmly.

The raft was coming now, caught in the current, which at all times is on the move toward the outlet of Loon Lake.

Slowly it drifted toward Dick, but the wind sweeping across the lake blew it in toward the shore, the ice on the other side of the break crumbling away everywhere where the raft touched.

Dick threw out his pole and tried to reach it, but the distance was too great and the big raft moved past him, losing itself in the gloom.

At the same instant a report was heard louder than all that had preceded it, and the ice began breaking up in every direction, the part upon which Dick stood separating itself from the place where Jessie was.

"Dick! Dick!" Jessie screamed.

"Dick! Dick! I've got the boat out! I'm a-coming!" shouted Indian Joe's voice through the gloom.

Then there was another crack and Dick found himself alone, standing on an ice cake not four feet square, which began sailing down the lake after the raft.

CHAPTER XV.

WHAT IS THE TROUBLE WITH JESSIE?

If Dick had lost his head and begun running about on the ice cake he would have found himself in the water in no time.

Personally he was in no very great danger, for he could swim as well as any man in the camp. His great anxiety was for Jessie, of course.

He shouted to her and got an answer.

"I'm here, Dick! I'm all right so far," she cried.

"Is there any raft near you?" yelled Dick. "Look behind—look all around. I can't remember just how they lie."

"I think I can see one," was the reply, "but it is so dark I can't be sure."

"Go for it. I may catch one yet. Joe! Hello, Joe!"

"Coming!" cried Joe, and the splash of the oars was heard. "I'm coming if I can only work my way through the ice cakes. They are mighty thick here."

"Can you see my light?"

"Yes."

"Keep it in your eye. What's that hollering—the boys down at the boom?"

"I guess it is, Dick. Confound it! I'm blocked again. I shall have to go around this fellow. Are you still on the ice, Dick, or are you on a raft?"

"On the ice," replied Dick, and then just as he said it the cake on which he stood broke in half, carrying the lantern into the lake.

"Confound it!" muttered Dick. "The lantern has gone, Joe," he shouted then.

"Keep on hollering. I'll get there," yelled Joe.

"Dick! Dick! I'm on a raft now," called Jessie.

"Good enough," answered Dick. "Here comes another. If I can get that I'm all right."

The big mass of logs was close to him, suddenly appearing in the gloom.

Dick threw out his pole, drove the hook into the nearest log and pulled the raft toward him.

He had just time to spring upon it when his ice cake went all to pieces and a tremendous snapping and crashing was heard on every side.

"The ice is all breaking up!" yelled Joe. "Where are you now, Dick?"

"Here! Here! Can't be far away from you. Come on."

"Are you on the raft, Dick?" called Jessie.

"I am. It's all right with me. How is it with you?"

"I'm on a raft sailing down the lake. I suppose I shall stop at the boom."

"We'll have you off and in the boat long before you get to the boom," cried Dick. "Here's Joe now. I can't see you, Jessie, but keep on calling. It will be all right."

"I'm not a bit afraid, Dick. Look out for yourself. Come to me when you can."

"Dick! Hello, Dick!" shouted Joe. "Give us the call, old fellow. I don't want to lose my bearings now."

"Here! Here!" yelled Dick, and in a moment he saw the boat coming toward him, but Jessie did not call again.

The next few moments Dick had all he could attend to, for the raft swung around, nearly swamping the boat.

But Joe managed to get out of the way and, pulling around on the other side, got the boat in such a position that Dick was able to jump in.

"Well, well, well! What in the world brought you out here with Miss Jessie?" Joe demanded, as Dick dropped into the stern seat with a sigh of relief.

"Didn't you hear the shouting, Joe?"

"I thought I heard some one calling out one time—was it you?"

"No, no! It was Mr. Bartlett."

"Never! That man can't possibly be alive."

"He is, though. We saw him. When we heard him call Jessie insisted upon going out on the ice. We went out a piece and then, just as the ice began to go, we saw him on the other side of the break. He's alive sure, Joe, but he's just as surely mad. We've got to start the hunt for him right away."

"By gracious, we have got all we can do to look after the logs to-night," said Joe. "However, we will do the best we can. Which way shall I pull?"

"Jessie! Jessie!" Dick sang out. "I'm in the boat now. Give us the call."

"Here I am, Dick," came the answer.

Joe pulled vigorously, sending the boat in the direction of the sound.

They had gone but a short distance when all at once Jessie gave a startled cry.

"What's the matter?" shouted Dick.

There was no answer.

Again and again Dick called and Joe shouted, too, but Jessie did not respond.

Filled with a thousand fears, the boys pulled on, passing one raft after another, but Jessie was on none of them.

They had now worked their way pretty well down the lake and could distinctly hear the shouts of the men at the boom as they moved about among the big logs seeing that everything was right.

"Joe, what can have happened?" said Dick, hoarsely.

"I guess there is only one explanation," replied Joe. "She has fallen off the raft."

Dick shuddered.

"It's terrible!" he said, "but we can't give up. We must take a look at every raft."

"We had better get to the boom as quick as we can," said Joe. "There's going to be trouble for us if we don't."

"Why?"

"Hark! Don't you hear?"

"The up-lake ice coming down!" gasped Dick.

"You bet, and it's coming with a rush. It will swamp us sure."

A dull, crunching sound was heard, which grew louder and louder as Joe pulled on.

"We can't escape it," he said at last. "We'd better pull for the shore."

"Too late for that," cried Dick, looking back. "Here she comes."

A great mass of ice piled up, cake upon cake, was now visible through the gloom.

On it came sweeping toward them, driven by the wind.

"We are done for," cried Joe. "Our only chance is to jump on the ice; the boat's a goner sure."

At the same instant a wild cry rang out over the lake.

It was Jessie.

"Dick! Dick!" she screamed. "Oh, save me, Dick!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BREAKING OF THE BOOM.

"There she is now!" cried Indian Joe. "We can't do anything. Get ready to jump, Dick. We've got all we want to do to save our own necks."

Dick did not hesitate, for he could see that their only hope was to do as Indian Joe said.

As the ice came on, driven down the lake by the strong wind, the boys made a bold jump and landed upon it.

In an instant the boat was struck and the ice, circling around it, crushed it like glass, and then swept over it and all trace of the boat vanished before the boys had time to say a word.

"Well, by thunder, that was quick work!" gasped Dick.

"And the end of our boat!" replied Joe. "Hello! There goes the horn."

Dick gave an exclamation of despair.

"They won't get me this time, Joe," he said.

"Evidently not," replied Joe. "I don't think anything serious can have happened yet, though. Paul Bates is afraid the boom will go and that's why he has given you the call."

"He must think it strange I haven't been down before. There he goes again. Holler, Joe. I'm all played out. Try and make Jessie hear. I'm so hoarse that I can only croak."

Joe yelled lustily, but it was the same as before.

No answer came from the missing girl, yet there had been no mistake about the cry for help.

In spite of what he said, Dick tried it, too, yelling with what little voice he had left.

It was all useless so far as Jessie was concerned, but their voices were heard at the boom.

"Joe! That you, Joe?" Paul Bates shouted.

"Right here," replied Joe.

"Where are you? Where's Captain Dick? The boom is straining terribly. I don't believe she can hold out long."

"We are on the ice. Look out for us!" cried Joe.

"On the ice! Thunderation! The ice is all broken up! What be you doing there?" Paul yelled back, his voice barely audible above the howling of the wind.

"Don't try to answer his questions. It isn't any use," said Dick. "Tell him to get the crew on the rafts. Let him give the signal. If the boom is going let it go. If it will only hold out till the boys come that's all we need."

Indian Joe thought that the rafts stood a fair show of starting on their long journey without a captain, but he said nothing about that, simply shouting out Dick's orders, which were promptly obeyed.

Again the horn sounded, blown twice in quick succession, then a pause and then once again.

This was the signal arranged with the crew, which was to take the rafts through to St. John, in which city all the cut of the winter had been sold, for it was not possible to transport the lumber from this section to Bangor.

Again and again the signal was repeated.

Dick listened attentively for the answer, for the crew were all sleeping in the huts at No. 1 ready for just this emergency.

"There she goes!" cried Joe at last, for the blast of a horn was heard in the distance.

The answering signal had come.

A little later loud shouts rang out and Dick knew that the crew were on their way down to the boom.

Meanwhile Joe kept calling to Paul Bates at intervals to know the condition of things and the response was always the same.

The boom was holding its own thus far, but Dick felt sure

that as soon as the ice touched the hindmost rafts it would force them forward against the boom, which would be pretty sure to yield.

Not another word from Jessie all this time. Dick had called again and again, but he had now given up all hope so far as she was concerned and we have no words to express the feeling of deep despair which came over him.

For Dick had a secret which he had shared with nobody.

He had learned to love Jessie Bartlett, but it was a hopeless love, for Jessie belonged to one of the best families of Bangor and Dick was only a poor logger working for his daily bread.

Thus Dick had never even dared to hint at the state of his feeling toward the brave girl; indeed, he hardly dared to admit to himself how he felt.

Thus it is by no means strange that he should be far more disturbed about Jessie than about the danger which threatened himself and Joe.

"I guess they are all there now, Dick," said Joe at last. "All that hollering means that they are going out on the rafts."

"I suppose it does," replied Dick, "and I'm mighty glad of it. The boys will be able to manage the rafts all right even without me. I don't feel a bit afraid."

"Nor for yourself, either, I guess," replied Joe. "I never saw such a cool fellow as you are, Dick, and yet there isn't one chance in forty that the ice will hold till we reach the boom."

"Don't agree with you," said Dick. "I believe it will. Anyhow, it isn't going to make matters any better to get excited about it."

They were standing on top of the heaped-up cakes as they spoke.

Every instant brought its changes; the cakes were breaking up all around them. The boys did not dare to make the least move, but so far their own footing had been firm and it so continued until they had almost reached the boom, when suddenly the whole mass went to pieces, but not without warning, and, fortunately, not before Dick and Joe had time to make their escape.

Two minutes before the break-up came the ice drifted up against one of the log rafts.

Dick saw his chance, flung out his logging pole and drew the raft in near enough to make it safe for them to jump.

They had no more than set their foot upon the raft when the ice went to pieces and all in the same instant a shout went up from the mouth of the river.

"There goes the boom! There goes the boom!"

CHAPTER XVII.

THE RAFTS GET UNDER WAY.

The breaking of a log boom at a time like this is not always a calamity by any means, but unless due precaution has been taken it may endanger the safety of the entire cut.

Dick had taken every precaution.

He was one of those careful fellows who take no chances and as he had been able to give his orders to the men even during the terrible excitement of the night, all was in readiness now.

In a moment the whole flotilla of rafts was on the move and the big mass of logs began to move down the Madawaska among the broken ice.

The thing to avoid now was a jam, for, of course, all the rafts could not pass into the river at once and the danger lay in having one forced up upon another, in which case the block-

ade at the outlet to Loon Lake might become so serious that they would not be able to break it up before the spring freshets were over and the water fell, in which case there would be no hope of moving the rafts until the following spring.

Dick and Joe wasted no time in talk.

Running to the end of their raft they were able to jump to the next one, which brought them into the jam, so that they could run from one to another until they reached the raft where Paul Bates, Nibsey and Ned Truell were.

Their arrival was hailed with joyful shouts, for Paul was terribly worried, not only on Dick's account, but from fear of a jam.

"There's three gone through already with nobody on them, cap!" he exclaimed, "and your raft is one of them. I'm awfully sorry, but we couldn't help it; your raft was away over near the other shore, you know."

"I know," said Dick. "Don't fret about it, boys. It's all right. Is everybody here?"

"I believe we are all here," replied Paul, and, indeed, there were enough of them, for almost every raft now had its men on board.

Dick took right hold, shouting his orders and putting himself on the raft nearest the jam.

This he was able to hold back by aid of his pole and Joe managed the next one; the three rafts ahead of them, by quick work and good management, were set free and passed safely into the Madawaska.

The raft Dick was on went next, and as it passed into the outlet he sprang upon the one behind and assisted the men in piloting that safely into the river also.

Indian Joe brought the next two down, Dick moving back from raft to raft all the while until the last one was safely launched upon the river.

To describe this process in detail is impossible.

There was nearly three-quarters of an hour's busy work in the rain before the danger was over.

Meanwhile the rain continued to fall in torrents, but the loggers did not mind that a bit, as they were well protected against it by the rubber suits.

Each raft had its little hut or shelter where the men had stowed away their belongings, and where they were to take their turns at sleeping.

Captain Dick's big cut was now safely launched and on its way to St. John, but it need not be supposed that they expected to go straight through without difficulty.

Dick was well posted on the situation, having had his scouts out for a week, and he knew that their present run was not to be a long one, for the ice still held firm in the narrows just above Grand Falls, and it might yet be some days before it would break up.

When it did there was another danger to face, for each raft must pass over the falls and very likely one or two would break up in the passage.

Then, if possible, the logs must be got together again and new rafts constructed.

Below the falls there was a stronger boom, which Dick had helped to build with his own hands and which he felt sure would hold its own against any pressure.

Not until this boom was safely passed could the voyage be actually said to be begun.

As the raft upon which Dick was passed into the river the young captain of the loggers blew a whistle.

This was the signal that he wanted to be taken off and that two others must come and take charge of the raft.

An answering whistle came from further along the fleet and soon Indian Joe came up in a boat with two men.

There were a number of strong boats attached to the fleet and these were in charge of Joe.

"Is everything all right?" called Dick.

"All right, cap!" replied Joe, "except the two forward rafts; they're away ahead. We don't know nothing about them yet."

"Then we'll go and find out," replied Dick, and after the two men had come aboard the raft he got into the boat with Joe.

"Well, we are out of this snap all right, Dick," said the half-breed, after they had started. He always called Dick by his name when they were alone.

"We are, thanks to you, Joe, but, oh, I feel terribly about poor Jessie!"

"It's an awful thing."

"Yes, and the worst of it is to think that I can't stop behind to look for her body. She's drowned, of course. Joe, I don't know what to do. I'm almost wild."

"I know what you will do, Dick."

"What do you mean?"

"You will brace up to it. You'll stick to your logs, as you ought to do."

"I must and I shall, of course, but it's enough to drive a fellow crazy. But there's no such thing as going back now."

Joe saw that Dick was much affected, so he wisely remained silent and pulled on past the different rafts.

When they had passed the head of the group Joe began to pull more vigorously, for the two runaway rafts were not even in sight.

It was very necessary to catch them and hold them back, not only because Dick wanted to keep the fleet together, but because all of his own belongings were in the hut on the forward raft and Joe's on the one behind.

"Do you know what I was thinking, Dick?" said Joe, suddenly.

"What?"

"That perhaps Mr. Bartlett was in a boat."

"What put that idea into your head? We saw him on the ice all right. Where would he get his boat?"

"Do you remember the boat that was stolen from No. 6 last week?"

"Yes, of course. That was —"

Dick paused, catching himself up just in time to prevent saying something which might have hurt Joe's feelings.

"It was stolen by Indians you were going to say, Dick. Out with it. Don't be afraid of treading on my toes. Now, the fact is there is no proof at all that any Indian was near the camp and I don't believe any were or I should have known it. Suppose Mr. Bartlett stole the boat, dragged it across the lake and hid it somewhere along the shore, is there anything to prevent his having used it to night?"

"The ice," suggested Dick.

"It's my belief that the ice broke up on the other side of the lake first," replied Joe, "and I shouldn't wonder a bit if Mr. Bartlett had the boat and was in it watching his chance to seize Miss Jessie. Of course, you will admit that he is mad."

"He most certainly acted like a crazy man. Hello! There are the rafts now! Pull ahead, Joe! We must try and hold them back somehow until the fleet comes down."

"We can do that all right, I guess," said Joe, beginning to pull even more vigorously.

The conversation was dropped now, for the boy loggers had all they could do to attend to business.

Dick stood up in the bow and, balancing himself carefully, got his logging pole all ready to seize the raft when he came within reach.

They were now almost down to the narrows, where Dick expected to still find solid ice.

A moment more and he was able to catch sight of the forward raft.

"She's stuck against the ice, Joe!" he shouted.

Instantly his words were taken up in a most unexpected fashion.

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" a voice shouted in the distance. "Yes, yes! Stuck against the ice! Stuck against the ice! Ho! Ho! Ho!"

"What was that?" cried Joe. "Dick, did you hear?"

"Mr. Bartlett!" gasped Dick.

"No."

"You bet it was. I'd know that laugh anywhere. Oh, Joe!"

Suddenly there came another cry and this time it was Jessie's voice—a most welcome sound to Dick, as may well be believed.

"Dick! Dick! I'm here on the raft with father! Come to me, Dick!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

BILL TWEEDIE TURNS UP AGAIN.

"Pull! Pull! Pull! Don't lose an instant! Get there, Joe!"

Dick was wild with excitement.

If it would have done any good he would have seized the oars himself, but he knew very well that Joe was a better hand at them than he.

He had shouted to Jessie again and again, but the only answer that came back was that same wild laugh, for Jessie did not respond.

As the boys drew nearer, passing the second raft and were able to get a view of the one ahead, they suddenly saw a lantern flash up.

"Look! Look!" cried Joe. "I was right. There he is—there's the boat!"

By the lantern's light they could see Mr. Bartlett running about on the raft in an uncertain fashion and there, sure enough, was a boat fastened alongside.

"I'll bet you what you like it was he who loosened the boom on the east end," cried Joe. "I built that boom to hold and I know it would have held, ice or no ice, if it was not fooled with. You'll find I'm right in the end."

"What's he doing? Where can Jessie be?" exclaimed Dick. "Oh, I wish we were there now!"

"We'll get there. Probably she is in the hut and tied up more than likely, that's why we don't hear from her. Look! He's chucking some of your things into the boat."

"As true as you live! He means to pull away from the raft!"

"Give him the call, Dick. Try it on!"

"Mr. Bartlett! Mr. Bartlett!" yelled Dick.

The treasurer turned and looked back.

"Oh, I hear you calling," he shouted, "but it isn't any use. That man Bartlett is dead. You can't call a dead man back to life again, no matter how much noise you make."

"Wait till we come up. I've got something to tell you," replied Dick, while Joe kept on working the oars for all they were worth.

The only answer was that same wild laugh.

Mr. Bartlett then ran into the hut, the horse blanket trailing after him over the logs.

In a moment he came out again carrying Jessie in his arms. The poor girl was silent; her head lay upon her father's shoulder as though she had fainted.

He laid her in the boat in such a position that her head rested on the stern seat and then, jumping in himself, seized the oars and pulled for the shore laughing wildly all the while.

"No use. We can't overtake them before they get ashore!"

cried Joe, for just then they came against a huge cake of ice which had lodged partly against the raft and partly against the river bank, which blocked their way.

"We have got to go around the raft," said Dick. "Don't lose a minute."

"That won't do, either. The raft is fast against the ice—don't you see."

"Then land right here and we'll try it on foot."

"I'll do that," said Joe, "and we don't run any risk about the logs, either. They are good to stay where they are all day if I know anything, especially as it has stopped raining now." Dick was too much excited to make any reply.

Joe pulled ashore in two minutes' time. Meanwhile the boat had disappeared, for there was a little cove beyond the ice cake and Mr. Bartlett pulled into it and was out of sight before Dick and Joe got ashore.

The boys pulled the boat well up on the bank and struck out on the ice cake, for the snow under the bank was rather deep and it would have been slow work traveling there.

"Run, Joe! Run like a good fellow!" cried Dick.

"What are you going to do when you get him?" demanded Joe. "You'll have trouble with that man. You don't want to do any shooting, of course, but it wouldn't surprise me a bit if he tried his hand at that game."

"Well, I'm going to rescue Jessie, hit or miss," responded Dick, as he dashed over the ice.

It was ticklish business, too, for the ice beneath beneath the boys as they ran and once it gave way and let Dick's left leg down to the knee.

They persevered, however, and in a moment were in the cove.

There was the boat pulled up on the shore as their own had been.

Mr. Bartlett was an old woodsman and knew his business.

"Gone!" cried Joe.

"We are too late," said Dick, "but it's easy tracing him."

"Yes, if we only had a light. Don't you believe you can follow that trail into the woods in the dark?"

"The light is coming," said Dick, "coming just in time."

It was as he said.

The storm was over at last and the clouds were breaking away.

In a moment the moon shone out in all her glory, but the wind continued and howled dismally through the pines as the boys hurried up the bank.

The trail left by Mr. Bartlett was very distinct, for the snow was soft, and, burdened as he was by the weight of his daughter, the imprints of his feet were deep.

The boys hurried on, expecting every moment to catch sight of the glimmer of his lantern or to hear that diabolical laugh ring out through the forest, but they saw no light and heard nothing up to the time they came suddenly up against a ledge of rocks higher than their heads, which cut off further progress.

"They went this way!" exclaimed Dick, pointing to the right.

"No, this way," said Joe, pointing to the left.

In fact the trail went both ways and the boys stood staring at the footprints wondering what it could mean.

"Strange," said Dick at last. "I can't understand this."

"Either one or the other are old tracks," replied Joe. "I'm sure I'm right, but you go your way and I'll go mine for a short distance; you can holler in a minute let me know how matters are. We won't either of us go very far, just to see if one of the trails don't end."

They separated, Dick hurrying to the right.

A dozen yards ahead the rocks took a turn and the trail followed them around.

Dick pushed on and as he turned around the ledge a man

suddenly sprang out from a niche in the rocks and caught him by the throat.

"Now I've got you, Dick Fowler!" he hissed. "Now's the time for my revenge!"

It was Bill Tweedie. The old ulster which he wore was opened, showing beneath the stripes of a convict's dress.

Dick had fallen into bad hands.

CHAPTER XIX.

DICK'S TERRIBLE DANGER.

It was a dangerous moment for the young captain of No. 9 and no mistake.

Bill Tweedie meant business.

In another instant he would have plunged a big hunting knife into Dick Fowler if he had not been stopped by something entirely unforeseen.

Two cawing crows suddenly flew from a big hemlock tree and went swooping down past Bill Tweedie's head.

One was chasing the other and everybody knows how bold the Maine crows get in winter, but everybody does not know the superstitions of the lumbermen connected with them.

To have crows around the camp means a good cut and general good luck.

To have a crow look in the window of a lumber camp means that trouble is close at hand, probably the death of some one in the hut. To have a crow suddenly fly in front of you when you are to engage in any enterprise means that it will not only fail, but will also bring trouble. To have two crows fly in front of you under the same circumstances means double trouble and probably death.

We could, if we chose, go on and tell of many other superstitions connected with crows, but we have said enough.

Dick Fowler had always laughed at this kind of thing as mere nonsense, but Bill Tweedie was a firm believer in all the superstitions of his class.

"Blame them birds!" he shouted, jamming Dick back against the trunk of a big spruce tree. "They've settled my quarrel with you, but just you wait! Just you wait! I'll get round it some other way!"

He was boiling with rage and he struck Dick a fearful blow across the face with the open palm of his hand. It sent our hero over in the snow and Tweedie jumped on him like a wildcat and gave him another between the eyes, which knocked Dick senseless for the moment.

It was well that it was so, for if it hadn't been very likely the burly lumberman, for whom Dick was no sort of a match, would have killed him, crows or no crows.

Taking advantage of the moment when Dick ceased to struggle, Bill Tweedie whipped out a strong cord and tied his hands securely and in this helpless condition Dick found himself when he came to his senses a moment later on.

"Ike! Ike! Oh, Ike! Here he is! I've got him! This way!" Bill Tweedie was shouting at the top of his lungs.

In a moment Mr. Ike Moon, well wrapped up against the weather in a big coat made of an old horse blanket, came plunging toward them through the snow.

"Gee, Bill! Why don't you do him?" he cried. "You was going to do such big things when you got your hands onto the captain of No. 9, and now you've got 'em thar you don't do nothing at all."

"I've got my reasons," growled Tweedie, clutching Dick by the coat collar and jerking him to his feet.

"What reasons? You swore you'd have revenge upon the boy."

"Well, I know, but I've had a warning."

"Gee! You don't say? What was it, Bill?"

"Two crows flew right in front of me."

"Two on 'em. Well, well! Which way did they go?"

"Northeast."

"Waal, neow, that means that what you want lies in that direction," said Ike, oracularly, and he bore a great reputation for signs and sayings among the lumbermen around Loon Lake.

"The old Beezely camp lies in that direction," said Bill. "S'pose we might's well go there for a hang out as anywhere; what d'yer say?"

"I say yes, and let's make a quick start, for I'm pretty nigh frozen."

"Say, Ike?"

"Say it, Bill."

"No crows didn't go and fly in front of you. There hain't nothing to hinder you from doing this here job."

"Oh, say; we'll see about that later," growled Ike, winking at Dick. "Come on, Bill! Come on!"

They started right into the forest then.

Bill Tweedie clutched Dick's arm and hurried him along.

So far not a word had escaped Dick. He knew these men too well to make him want to talk.

At first this silence did not seem to make much impression on Bill Tweedie, but as they kept on through the forest he suddenly turned on Dick and exclaimed:

"Waal, most noble captain of No. 9, why don't you open that old burned potato trap of yours? Hev ye lost yer tongue sence ye sent me to the stone jug?"

"My tongue is all right, Bill Tweedie," replied Dick, quietly. "Nothing the matter with that."

"There hain't, eh? Waal, why don't you use it, then?"

"Because you seem to be doing all the talking for one reason, and because I've got nothing to say for another."

"Cool! But then you always were that. You know me pretty well. If I was in your shoes I should be scared."

"And if I was I should never let you know it," replied Dick.

"So, so. Well, boy, you and me used to be friends, but we are deadly enemies now, all right. See them striped clothes? 'Twas you that put them on to me, and don't you forget it, I'll have my revenge."

"I suppose that you have escaped from State's prison," said Dick, a little curious, it must be owned.

"Well, I did. I knocked one keeper silly and spoiled the face of another doing it, and do you know what gave me the strength to do it? It was my desire to have revenge on you."

Dick was silent. He had started up a line of conversation which was anything but pleasant.

Without a word in way of answer he trudged on through the softened snow between the two loggers.

They were now working back toward the river by another way and were pretty near it already.

The old Beezely camp lay a few yards back from the river, a short distance above the falls.

"I wanter say," remarked Ike Moon at last, "that I think every moment you hang around here is a moment of danger. The Canuck line is in sight and the best thing you can do is to cross it. If you mean to do the boy, why, do him. Who believes in them old sayings, anyhow?"

Bill Tweedie suddenly halted.

"By geul, so I will!" he cried. "You are right, Ike Moon. The sooner we skip over the Canada line the better, crows or no crows. Dick Fowler, you are going to die!"

Clutching Dick by the throat, he whipped out the knife and crowding him back against the tree, prepared to plunge it into his heart.

CHAPTER XX.

LOST IN BLACK CREEK.

When Bill Tweedie made that grab Dick actually thought that his last moment had come.

With his hands tied behind him he was entirely helpless and there is not a doubt that he would have seen his finish then and there if another sudden and unexpected interference had not occurred, which certainly did seem to justify the prophecy of the two crows.

As Bill Tweedie raised the knife ready to plunge it into Dick's heart something dropped.

That something was nothing less than a huge bobcat at least four feet long.

Down it came off an overhanging limb, and, landing on Bill Tweedie's shoulder, began clawing and spitting.

It dug its teeth into the back of Bill's head; it dug its terrible claws into the man's left cheek, tearing the flesh in the most horrible manner.

"Shoot him! Shoot him or he'll kill me!" cried the convict, bellowing with pain.

But this was just what Ike Moon could not do, for he had no revolver.

He twitched the knife out of Tweedie's hand and made a plunge at the bobcat, but missed the snarling creature.

"Oh! Oh! Take him off! Take him off!" yelled Tweedie, and in his agony he started and ran on toward the shore, followed by Ike Moon, who was trying to get another chance to strike with his knife.

So great was his excitement that Dick ran after him instead of running away.

"Stand still! Stand still and give Ike a show!" he shouted, forgetting that Tweedie's rescue would mean death to himself.

And death was right at hand, though not for the young captain of No. 9.

As Tweedie and Moon ran down a little slope suddenly there came a report like thunder, crashing and grinding sounds following and a great mass of ice breaking into a thousand pieces began moving toward the river.

Tweedie and Ike Moon disappeared instantly.

"Save us, Dick Fowler! Save us!" Ike yelled, and then was gone in an instant.

"Black Creek!" gasped Dick, pausing on the brink.

Another step and he would have been down the slope and into the water himself.

The ice went sweeping toward the Madawaska, carrying Bill Tweedie and Ike Moon with it.

Black Creek was a noted danger spot, for here was a deep hole forty feet down or more, it was said, and the water of the Madawaska set back into it in times of freshet like this.

Dick himself knew of two instances when lumbermen had lost their lives by the breaking of the ice in Black Creek, back in the days when the old Beezely camp was occupied.

Tweedie never rose to the surface; probably the bobcat still clung to him and held him down, but Ike Moon came up once and called wildly for help, and Dick, in the kindness of his noble heart, would have risked his own life to save either one of them, but there was nothing to be done, for he was helpless himself, made so by the very man who was now whirling down the dark, rushing water to his death.

It was an awful thing, though, and Dick leaned against a tree and closed his eyes to shut out the horrible sight.

In a moment all was silence save for the rushing waters of the creek, freed from loose ice now and running into the Madawaska.

"Waal, waal. That's the last of them!" gasped Dick, and it

would have been the last of me if it had not happened. I must get back to Joe, for I can do nothing here."

He stopped and shouted to Ike Moon three or four times, but no answer came back. No doubt both were drowned and we may as well mention right here that a week later the disfigured body of Bill Tweedie was pulled out of the St. John forty miles down the river, but of Ike Moon's fate nothing was ever certainly known.

Dick went stumbling back through the snow by the way he had come, following the trail as well as he could and shouting to Joe as he went along.

But no answer came and morning dawned with Dick in a still worse plight.

He was lost in the forest. Somehow he had managed to miss the trail altogether, and try as he would, he could not find it again.

But he was free by this time. Constant working on the knots which Bill Tweedie hastily tied had loosened them and Dick finished the job by backing up against a tree and rubbing the cords until he managed to wear one of them through. Then he was able to slip out his right hand and the job was done.

But which way should he go now that he realized the fact that he was lost?

As the sun rose Dick set his course by it and started back to the river.

He was plodding wearily on when suddenly a clearing opened before him and Dick came out upon an old deserted lumber camp which he could not recognize ever having seen before.

Most of the huts were in ruins, but there was one which still stood intact and through the window the light of a blazing wood fire could be seen.

"What place can this be?" thought Dick. "It don't belong to the Loon Lake Lumber Company, that's certain. I must take my chances, though I suppose just like enough some of the strikers have got a camp here."

He pushed on boldly to the hut, terribly worried about poor Jessie Bartlett; indeed, it is a fact that he scarcely thought of his own troubles through thinking of hers.

He tried the door, but, contrary to the usual custom in the Maine woods, it was fastened.

Finding that he could not open it, Dick was just about to knock when suddenly the door was thrown open from the inside and Mr. Bartlett stood before him.

"Ha! Ha! Ha! So you have come!" he cried. "So you have come just in time to die!" and before Dick realized his danger the madman rushed upon him and seized him by the throat.

CHAPTER XXI.

AT THE MERCY OF THE MADMAN.

Dick exerted all his strength and shook himself free, but he was not so successful when he tried to seize the long, glittering knife which Mr. Bartlett had suddenly produced.

"Hold on!" he cried, fixing his eyes steadily on the madman. "Hold on, Mr. Bartlett! Don't strike me! Don't you know me! Don't you remember Dick?"

"I remember nothing later than the year 1604," replied Mr. Bartlett, with a wild laugh. "Dick? Who's Dick? You're only a boy, but I want you to understand that I have been living for three thousand years."

"Why, of course. I understand all that," replied Dick, with all the calmness he could assume. "I'm another of the same kind, although I do look young. You knew me once pretty well, Mr. Bartlett, and if you stop and think a bit I'm sure you will know me now."

"That's a proposition worth considering," replied the mad lumberman, with another of his terrible laughs. "Shakespeare says that to be or not to be is the question, but I say he lies; the real question is to think or not to think. I'll consider your proposition, young man, and upon second thought I won't kill you now. You look hungry; come in and have some breakfast and we'll talk it over. Wipe your feet. Don't soil the floor of the royal palace. I suppose, of course, you know that you are in the presence of the King of Maine?"

"Certainly. I know that very well," replied Dick. "But I don't feel like coming in while you hold on to that knife. You might change your mind and try to kill me after all. I'm not ready to die just yet."

"I suppose not! Nobody is ever ready to die, except such a fellow as I am, who can't be killed."

"If you can't be killed give me the knife and I'll take care of it for you," said Dick. "That's a fair bargain. Then I can come in and take breakfast with you and won't feel afraid."

"No," replied Mr. Bartlett, pretending to think. "No, I won't do that, but I'll tell you what I will do. I'll put the knife up here on top of this beam, so. Now you are safe, for I shall soon forget where it is. What do you want here, anyway? Now is your time to tell."

"Why, I just dropped in to see you and Miss Jessie," replied Dick. "Is she at home?"

This was the shot that he was working up to and Dick listened eagerly for the reply.

It was most disappointing.

A shadow came over Mr. Bartlett's haggard face.

"My daughter's affairs are none of your business, young man!" he exclaimed. "Miss Jessie wants no visitors. If that is what your errand is you had better get out."

"Is Miss Jessie here, sir?"

"None of your business, I tell you!" shouted Mr. Bartlett. "Sit down at the table and eat."

It was no time to press the question.

"If Jessie is in the hut she must have heard my voice," thought Dick. "Can he have killed her? What in the world shall I do?"

The horrible thought seemed to take complete possession of him. Dick dropped into a chair, which stood near the table, and stared at Mr. Bartlett, who gave another of his terrible laughs.

"What will you have to eat?" he demanded. "There's roast

turkey and plum pudding; there's quail on toast and fried liver and any old thing you like to name."

"I'll leave it to you," said Dick. "I've been tramping around in the snow until I'm hungry enough to eat anything at all."

"That's right," said Mr. Bartlett. "I like to see people eat. It shall be quail on toast. I'll go out and catch the quail."

As he spoke he ran out of the hut, slammed the door behind him and was gone in an instant, leaving Dick entirely uncertain whether to run after him or to stay behind and search the hut.

Now was his chance for the latter move, and he decided to adopt it.

"Jessie! Jessie!" he shouted.

He listened breathlessly for the answer, but it did not come.

"I'm afraid she's not here," thought Dick. "I'll soon see, though."

He ran up the ladder into the loft, finding it vacant.

Down he went in a hurry and seized an iron ring set in the hut, for there was also a cellar, and through the trap-door to which the ring was attached was no doubt the way to reach it.

"Jessie! Are you down there?" Dick called.

He thought he could hear something like a groan, and he ran down the ladder.

Sure enough! There in one corner upon a pile of hemlock boughs lay Jessie Bartlett.

She was tied up hand and foot, and an old handkerchief had been thrust into her mouth for a gag.

Dick flew to her side, pulled out the handkerchief, and, whipping out his pocket knife, set her free.

"Oh, Dick!" gasped the poor girl. "Oh, Dick! I knew you would come! Oh, how I have suffered! Where is my father? He will kill you—he has gone crazy! You saw him? You must have seen him before you called?"

"Yes, I know—I know all about it," said Dick, soothingly, and he caught the unfortunate girl in his arms and raised her up.

It was all Jessie could do to stand. Her head fell over on Dick's shoulder as he led her toward the ladder.

"We must get away from this place at once," he said. "Your father is always now, and he must find us gone when he returns. We will attend to him later. You won't refuse, Jessie? You will come with me?"

"I must," was the reply. "Oh, Dick, I have had a terrible experience. My poor father don't know me at all. He seems to be entirely out of his mind. He tied me up here and—oh, he is coming! What shall we do?"

Unfortunately it was too late to do anything, but Dick had done the best he could to hurry Jessie up out of the cellar.

Mr. Bartlett sprang through the door with an awful yell.

"Ha! Ha! I knew you'd go down there!" he shouted.

"Now I've got you both prisoners, Ho! Ho! Ho!"

Slam, bang, went the cellar door, and a big iron bolt was shot into place.

"Listen!" yelled Mr. Bartlett. "Hello, down there! Listen to me! I am mad! You are at the mercy of a madman! I'm going to roast you out—there's no other way! I have set fire to the hut, and you two will stop where you are till it burns down!"

CHAPTER XXII.

LOOKING FOR DICK.

When the two boy loggers separated at the point where the trail divided it will be remembered that Indian Joe went to the left, leaving Dick to follow the right hand trail and go tumbling into the adventures which we have just described.

The young half-breed's experience was quite different.

The left hand trail merely took a wide sweep and came back to the river bank about a mile further up the stream, much to the disgust of Indian Joe, who entirely failed to understand what it meant, and, after spending some twenty minutes or more trying to make it out, he hurriedly retraced his steps with the intention of overtaking Dick.

If Joe had been a full fledged Western Indian he might have discovered the truth, for Mr. Bartlett had actually gone that way, having left a boat hidden here before he went up above the log boom in the storm.

In this boat the father and daughter went a short way on up the river and then struck back into the forest to the deserted camp, which was only a few yards from the river bank.

But Joe did not "get on" to this at all, and spent the balance of the night pushing around through the forest calling Dick's name, and meeting with no success whatever in trying to locate his chief.

Morning found all the rafts down against the ice jam above the falls.

The storm had ceased and it now began to blow up cold. There was no wind, and there seemed to be little chance of the ice breaking up at the falls, for here the channel was very much narrower than further up stream, and the ice had become pretty well banked.

Of course the whole mass might take a start at any moment—it was bound to go shortly—but Joe felt that it was safe for some hours yet, and he set about his work in the systematic way which was characteristic of all he did.

Although most dreadfully worried about Dick—and Jessie, too—Joe attended to business first and went from raft to raft to make sure that all was right.

There was great excitement among the loggers when they learned what had occurred, for the young captain of No. 9 had grown to be immensely popular with the crew, and those among them who knew Jessie simply adored her.

All hands were anxious to take to the wood and join in the search, but Joe, who had been acting as a sort of first lieutenant of Dick's all winter, now assumed full authority and positively would not have it, ordering all hands to stay by the

In case the ice moved while he was away, Paul Bates was to act as captain and Ned Truell second in command.

Having settled everything satisfactorily, Joe took Nibsey with him and they started back into the woods to make a thorough search for the missing ones.

It was now daylight, and as the snow had hardened up a bit it was much easier to follow the trails.

Joe and Nibsey turned to the right at the junction of the two tracks, and it was not long before they found themselves at Black Creek.

"Hello!" cried Nibsey, as they came upon the rushing stream. "We've come to the end of our rope, Joe."

"That's what's the matter," replied Joe, looking up very much concerned. "This is a bad job, Nibsey. I guess the ice broke up here in the creek last night all right. What if Dick was on it? If he was we shall never see him again."

"Three persons came down here," said Nibsey. "I told you that before, Joe, but you wouldn't answer a feller. Do you suppose all were drowned?"

"What's the use talking," said Joe. "There were two sets of footprints from the start and Dick's made three. What has been bothering me is that none of them was a girl's. I'm afraid we have struck the wrong trail altogether, but I can't understand just what it means."

"Dick wears a No. 8 shoe," said Nibsey, "and I should say that these here footprints were his, and, see, they go back again. I told you some of 'em were going both ways."

"I'm taking all that in," said Joe. "You are right. Some one went back, but the other two didn't, and nobody crossed the creek. We'll go back, too, Nibsey. We must follow this thing up to the end."

Joe soon found out that he had undertaken a big contract, for the trail led them on into the thick of the forest and then twisted here, there and everywhere, and the footprints had been made by some one wearing a No. 8 shoe.

"It's Dick! It's certainly Dick," Nibsey declared again and again, but all Joe would say was "Mebbe so," and then he would add: "Well, if it was Dick he must have been lost for fair."

After going on for a long distance the boy loggers saw that they were coming back to the river again, and it was about this time that Joe suddenly perceived smoke rising among the trees.

"Fire over there, Nibsey!" he cried. "Fire sure, and our trail leads us right toward it. We are coming up against something at last."

"Hurry up!" said Nibsey. "Like enough it's Dick."

"It's the old Beezely camp that lies in this direction," replied Joe, as they ran on.

"Never heard of it."

"That's because it was abandoned before you came to Loon Lake. There it is! By gracious, the big hut is all ablaze!"

"Look! Look!" cried Nibsey; "Mr. Bartlett, as true as you live!"

In front of the burning hut a man was running around gesticulating wildly. He was talking to himself, but the boys were still too far off to catch the words.

As they ran on he caught sight of them and stopped his strange movements.

"Is that you, Indian Joe?" he shouted. "Is that the great Napoleon with you? Ha! Ha! Ha! I see it is! Come on! Come on! Come on and get roasted. Jessie is in there cooking, and Dick Fowler, too, and here goes your uncle to take his turn! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ho! Ho! Ho!"

With a frightful laugh Mr. Bartlett plunged into the door of the blazing hut and disappeared.

"Run, Nibsey! Run!" shouted Joe. "I believe he speaks the truth! Dick and Jessie must be saved!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

IS IT TOO LATE?

Dick and Jessie were still in the cellar of the burning hut. There was no chance of getting out. The trap door was a heavy affair and the bolt a strong one. Why such an arrangement should have been made puzzled Dick, for timber camps are not usually provided with cellars, and up in the Maine woods bolts and bars are all but unknown.

If Dick had been familiar with the old Beezely camp he had never even heard of it until the Moon mentioned it the night before—he might have understood better, for among the old-time lumbermen there was a story of how old Joan Beezely, who always came on the ground and attended to his own cutting, had been a most close-fisted fellow, and usually carried his money with him into the woods.

The story was that the old man, now dead these many years, had been murdered for his money, and was found one day with a knife in his heart lying in this very cellar.

Then there were also rumors about the old lumberman's money having been hidden in the hut, and how many a logger had looked for it, but in vain, of all of which Dick knew nothing, when that terrible cry came from the madman in the room above.

"Father! Father!" screamed Jessie. "Oh, let us out. Don't keep us here to be burned alive!"

The only answer was another wild laugh, and then the madman was heard running out of the hut.

"He is only trying to frighten us," said Dick, "and for my part I'm not going to be frightened. We have got to get out of here somehow. How did he get you, Jessie? You have not told me yet."

"He came up to the ice cake in a boat," replied Jessie. "He caught me before I knew he was near. I tried to make him understand who I was, but he wouldn't listen. He tied me up then, Dick, and he put the handkerchief in my mouth. I was almost frightened to death. I think I must have fainted after I called you the last time, for the next I knew I was on the raft and we were floating down the river."

"Did your father seem to know you then?" said Dick.

"He knew me at times, and then again he would declare that he had never seen me before, and ask me if I had seen Jessie, and talk so wild that I was afraid of him. When the raft was stopped by the ice he came into the raft but quite sensible, and told me that we had got to leave it and that we were to go

ashore. Then he untied me and took me into the boat. That was the time I called for help again. It made him so angry that he immediately tied my hands behind me and put the handkerchief into my mouth, and kept me that way all the time we were walking through the woods. At last we came to this hut, and he forced me down here and tied me up, as you found me. Dick, it is just dreadful. Father is mad—hopelessly mad. Of that there cannot be the least doubt."

"I should hope not," exclaimed Dick, "for I should hate to think that Mr. Bartlett would do such things in his right senses, but tell me, Jessie, did he say a word of where he had been all winter? Did you find out anything about that?"

"He told me he had lived here," replied Jessie, "and I guess it is true. He told me he had lived on rabbits and partridges, and that once in a while he shot a deer, but I did not see any gun during the short time I was in the room upstairs."

"Perhaps he left it in one of the other huts," suggested Dick, "and now, Jessie, I don't want to frighten you, but I ought to tell you that the hut is probably on fire."

"I know it, Dick. I can smell the smoke."

"It's coming in thick, too. I must try that trapdoor again."

But this was a hopeless task. Over and over again Dick had tried to force up the trap, but it resisted all his efforts as it did now.

Thicker and thicker grew the smoke. He could hear the crackling of flames in the room above.

Dick pounded on the trapdoor, called, shouted, fairly yelled in the vain hope that he might be able to make Mr. Bartlett hear them and come to their relief, but it was all to no purpose.

"Give it up, Dick," said Jessie at last. "We cannot save ourselves, but we can die bravely. I don't think I can hold out much longer. I'm almost stifled now."

So was Dick, though he had said nothing about it. The place, dark enough before, was black with smoke now, and so hot that they could scarcely endure it. Still air seemed to work its way in from under the foundation of the hut and they were able to breathe.

Dick threw his arms around Jessie.

"Oh, Dick, I shall die," she murmured, and her head fell over upon his shoulder, and the horrible fear came to Dick that she was already dead.

This was the state of affairs when Dick suddenly heard the Indian's shouts once more.

He could not make out the words, but he heard the awful laugh and then he could hear him running over the floor overhead, and the trapdoor was suddenly lifted up.

"Are you roasting all right down there?" shouted Mr. Bartlett. "Are you most done?"

Dick caught Jessie in his arms and started to make a rush for the steps, when all at once Mr. Bartlett came tumbling down head first, sprawling at Dick's feet.

The trapdoor fell back into place with a loud slam, and at the same instant there was an awful crash.

The hut had fallen.

Buried beneath a mass of burning wood, what chance was there for Dick or Jessie or the wretched madman?

Indian Joe and Nibsey, as they came running up, thought there was no chance for any one.

"If Dick and Jessie Bartlett are in there," said Joe, hoarsely, "why, they are dead."

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

Poor Nibsey stood staring at the burning mass and then made a rush for one of the other huts.

Joe followed him, for he understood well enough what the boy's intentions were.

Scattered about among the ruins of the next hut were many of the roof boards. Nibsey got one and Joe seized another, and, bringing them back to the fire, began scattering the burning logs as best they could.

It was hard work and hot work, but they soon accomplished a great deal, and before many moments had the floor comparatively clear, for it must be remembered that a hut in a lumber camp is only a light affair, and the logs were already pretty well burned through before the roof fell in.

The floor was all ablaze, but by beating it with their boards the boys soon had the flames pretty well under control, and they then began stamping out what remained.

They were still thus engaged when all at once the charred remains of the trapdoor were suddenly thrown up and a face, all blackened and smoke-begrimed, came into view.

"Dick!" yelled Nibsey.

"The captain, by thunder!" shouted Joe, and then there was a rush for Dick, who motioned them back.

"Air! Air!" he gasped, and then popped down out of sight again.

Of course Joe and Nibsey were not going to stand there waiting for him to reappear.

It took them next to no time to gain the trapdoor, and Joe was first down the ladder.

The place was so thick with smoke that at first they could see nothing, but in a moment they made out Dick coming toward them carrying Jessie Bartlett in his arms.

"It's all right, Joe!" he called out. "She has only fainted. Take her up the ladder and come back and help me with Mr. Bartlett—Nibsey, you stay."

Joe took Jessie tenderly in his arms and bore her up into the open air, where, in a moment, she revived.

When he returned to the cellar he found that the smoke had pretty well cleared away, but he could see nothing of Dick or Nibsey until all at once he perceived the former crawling out of a hole in the wall and dragging Mr. Bartlett after him.

"This is what saved us, Joe!" he cried. "It was all plastered over with dirt, and we never should have known it was here if Mr. Bartlett had not fallen against it when he tumbled down the ladder. What am I talking about? Why, there is another cellar in through that passage as big as this one, and such a find as I've made there, Joe!"

Dick had drawn Mr. Bartlett out of the narrow passage by this time.

"He seems to have struck his head when he fell," he explained, but he's breathing, though—I don't think he is dead."

"Glad of it! If he only gets back his wits Mr. Bartlett is as good a man as there is in the State of Maine!" cried Joe; "where's Nibsey, Dick?"

"Inside there. Hello, Nibsey! Coming?"

"You bet I am, Dick!" was the answer from the hole.

"Got it?"

"You bet I have, Dick, only it is stuck in the hole."

Here was more mystery for Joe, but it was soon explained by the appearance of Nibsey dragging after him a small trunk, black and moldy, and looking as though it might have been buried for a hundred years.

"Old Beezely's money!" cried Joe. "Well, I declare!"

"Why, it's money fast enough! How did you know?" replied Dick.

"There's the greatest pile of greenbacks that ever you laid eyes on in that trunk."

* * * * *

About an hour later a boat was pulled down the Madawaska toward the raft flotilla, and the entire logging crew were thrown into the greatest excitement when they saw who was aboard.

There was the Captain of No. 9 and Jessie Bartlett and Indian Joe and the redoubtable Napoleon Nibs, who was supporting a gentleman on the stern seat, a stranger to many of the men, but who was instantly recognized by others as Mr. Bartlett, the missing treasurer of the Loon Lake Lumber Company, and besides all these the boat carried a small black trunk.

A shout of welcome went up as the boat approached, and Dick responded with a cheer.

"It's all right now, boys!" he shouted. "We are going right aboard my raft. Yes, I've found Mr. Bartlett, but he's a very sick man and can talk to no one now."

It was so, but as a matter of fact Mr. Bartlett's trouble had taken a strange turn.

Perhaps it was the blow he received on the head when he pitched down through the trapdoor that did it, or perhaps it was due to some other cause, but certain it is that when Mr. Bartlett came back to consciousness, after Joe and Dick carried him out of the cellar, he awoke a sane man and without the slightest recollection of anything that had happened to him since the night Bill Tweedie and his gang attacked Camp No. 9.

He was taken to the raft hut, and there Dick and Jessie carefully attended him.

Joe and Nibsey only waited to see that they were comfortable and to have a peep into the black trunk which Dick had discovered in the secret cellar.

It was jammed full of greenbacks of all denominations, though the majority seemed to be small bills.

They hardly had time to glance into the trunk when the cry arose outside that the ice was beginning to go over Grand Falls.

"Leave me with father, Dick!" exclaimed Jessie. "I can do everything that is needed. Your place is outside."

And so it was. Dick had his hands full during the next half hour, at the end of which time every raft had passed safely over the falls, and the run down to St. John had fairly begun.

And with the beginning of the raft voyage our story comes to its close, for not one unusual incident occurred between the Falls and Indiantown, just above St. John, where the rafts were turned over to the saw mill to be converted into boards.

Mr. Bartlett recovered rapidly, and he and Jessie decided to stick to the raft until it reached St. John.

The mill treasurer was now entirely sane, and under Indian Joe's good cooking his physical strength was soon restored.

The contents of the trunk footed up to over \$8,000.

Its discovery was kept a profound secret from the raft crew, for they were a rough lot of men, and all felt that trouble might come if the truth were made known.

As soon as the rafts were delivered to the saw mill Mr. Bartlett and Jessie took the European & North American Railroad to Bangor.

Dick, Joe and Nibsey accompanied them, and upon reaching Bangor the money was divided between those three, Mr. Bartlett refusing to touch a cent.

"No, no, boys," he said, "I owe my life to you, and, more than that, you kept me from taking a life in my insane moments which is dearer to me than my own. Keep the money. Stick to your business and prosper—that is my earnest wish."

Now, that wish was expressed five years ago, and the boys have prospered.

Dick married Jessie Bartlett last fall, and is now manager of all the big lumber company's interests, not only on Loon Lake, but elsewhere.

Joe is captain at Loon Lake now, and as for Nibsey, he is a sort of a general factotum for Dick, which, considering his rather limited intelligence, is all that he could expect.

Undoubtedly Dick Fowler will soon be one of the biggest lumber kings in the State of Maine.

Next week's issue will contain "THE INVISIBLE TWELVE." An Irish Romance of the Present Day. By Allan Arnold.

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—All back numbers of this weekly except the following are in print: 1 to 25, 27, 29 to 36, 38 to 40, 42, 43, 45 to 51, 53 to 55, 57 to 60, 62, 64 to 69, 71 to 73, 75, 79, 81, 84 to 86, 88, 89, 91 to 94, 98 to 100, 102, 105, 107, 109 to 111, 116, 119, 122, 124 to 126, 132, 139, 140, 143, 163, 166, 171, 179 to 181, 186, 192, 212, 213, 215, 216, 233, 239, 247, 257, 265, 268, 272, 277, 294. If you cannot obtain the ones you want from any newsdealer, send the price in money or postage stamps by mail to FRANK TOUSEY, PUBLISHER, 168 WEST 23D STREET, New York City, and you will receive the copies you order by return mail.

A COUNTERFEITING CASE.

By John Sherman.

About a dozen years ago I was sent from Washington to a certain section of a Western State, where it was suspected the headquarters of a gang of counterfeiters was situated.

As it was of the utmost importance that my real character should not be suspected, I assumed the part of an Englishman traveling for pleasure, and secured from the department several letters of introduction stating I was such.

Among others was one to the principal of the Normal Academy, which had lately been established.

The town named Starville, was of recent growth; in fact, ten years before it had been but a small village, until the advent of a new main line of railroad had brought it suddenly into prominence. The principal of the academy, to whom my letter of introduction was addressed, had been the schoolmaster when Starville boasted but half a dozen houses, and he had grown with the town until he had attained his present position.

This information I picked up at the hotel, and having lunched, I set out to call upon Mr.—or, as he styled himself, Professor Gelston.

After reading the letter of introduction he received me with all the cordiality that was in his nature to show, but that was not much. I have never before or since seen such a perfect living definition of the word pedagogue. He seemed expressly designed by nature to awe small boys with his stiff, pompous air and grandiloquent utterances.

Still I could see that there was a certain depth of character in the man, and as he asked me to become his guest during my stay in the town, I consented.

Gelston occupied a fine house. He was a bachelor, although, as he informed me, he contemplated being soon married.

In my character of an Englishman I suppose I rather overdid the thing, but at any rate I dressed myself for dinner at six o'clock as if I was going to a banquet.

It was a very good dinner, nevertheless, although my host and I ate it alone; and when it was finished, and he proposed retiring to his study to smoke a cigar, I determined to take the opportunity to inform him of my real mission and ask his assistance.

Before I could do so, however, he had taken up the evening paper, and glancing at it, an exclamation left his lips.

"This is infamous!" he said. "Here I see another merchant has been victimized to the extent of over two thousand dollars in counterfeit money. It is absolutely criminal on the part of the government to allow these counterfeiters to remain at liberty. Why do they not at once take steps to extirpate the scoundrels?"

"They have already done so," I answered.

His look expressed the utmost astonishment.

"Ah!" he said, quickly, "then you are not the Englishman you pretend to be?"

"No," I answered, rising from my seat. "I am a special agent of the Secret Service, sent from Washington for the purpose of hunting down this gang of scoundrels."

As I spoke thus my host started violently, and an expression that seemed one of fear came upon his face. It was only momentary, however, and quickly recovering himself, he expressed his satisfaction, and promised to give me all the assistance in his power.

A little after ten o'clock I was shown to my bedroom. I did not feel sleepy, however, and with a habit I have, I extinguished the lamp, and lighting a cigar, sat in the dark, smoking and thinking.

A moment or two afterward I fancied I heard a stealthy footstep in the hall. I listened, but did not hear it again, although in a minute or two more the street door was cautiously opened and closed.

The window of my room looked out upon the street, and peering out I saw a man descend the stoop, and, after looking cautiously around, walk rapidly away.

In an instant a dozen vague suspicions flashed into my mind. That the man was my host, I had no doubt; and then the remembrance of his look when I had informed him of my real character came back to me. Perhaps he might be in league with the counterfeiters, and I had foolishly put them on their guard.

Even while these thoughts passed through my mind my resolution was taken. I had not yet undressed, and in another moment I had left the room, and, cautiously descending the stairs, passed out of the house into the street.

My man was just turning the corner of the block as I did so, and, quickening my pace, I soon had him in sight again. Though possibly I might have been indiscreet in my disclosures, I was no novice in my profession, and I knew enough to shadow a man without allowing him to suspect it.

For nearly a mile further the man went on, until a sort of miniature canyon was reached, when a man sprang from the shadow of a rock into the pass before him.

Whoever the sentinel was, he was evidently acquainted with Gelston, and the two talked earnestly for several minutes. Then, turning, the schoolmaster rapidly retraced his steps to the town.

I again followed him, until I saw him enter his own house. I, however, waited until morning, when I related a plausible fiction of having been out to take a morning walk.

That evening my host seemed in high good humor. I was puzzled to account for it at first, until he told me that he was to be married the day following the next. Under the circumstances, his hilarity was natural enough, and immediately after dinner he left the house to spend the evening with his intended bride.

Making inquiries, I learned that the young lady he was going to marry was beautiful and accomplished, but her parents were poor. More than one person said the girl was sacrificing herself to save her father, on whose property Gelston held a mortgage. This information in nowise strengthened my good opinion of my host, and when, about midnight, he returned home, I had become almost convinced he was in league with the counterfeiters.

Still I had no proof, and I determined to go to work the following day to set my suspicions at rest one way or the other, but the morning brought with it news as tragic as it was unexpected.

A woman had been found dead, having been shot, just beyond the suburbs of the town. She was about thirty-five or forty, though still handsome, and a stranger. She had arrived at the hotel the previous afternoon, and had registered as Mrs. Smith, of Ohio. That was all that was known of her until she was found lying cold in death.

There were no papers either upon her person or among her baggage to throw any further light upon her identity. In her valise, however, were gold and bills to the amount of \$500 or more. It was an inexplicable mystery.

Was it not probable that the haunt of the counterfeiters was somewhere in the vicinity, and the crime had been their work?

No sooner had night fallen than I armed myself and proceeded toward the spot to which I had followed Gelston.

As I drew near the spot where the man had suddenly appeared, I left the path, and climbing the rocks again, crept stealthily forward. Doing so, I saw a man armed with a rifle, seated in the shelter of a rock, and evidently placed there as a sentinel.

Unseen and unsuspected, I went on until in the canyon below me I heard the sound of voices.

"Yes," one of the voices said, "we had better go back and wait until morning. You can't tell what that blame detective is up to, and it would never do to be caught now, with all that stuff on hand."

"I guess you're about right," another voice answered.

As they came to this conclusion the speakers moved on, and instantly I began to descend into the canyon. As I did so, I saw ~~two~~ men about twenty yards ahead of me.

For a hundred yards or so they went on until they reached an opening in the rocks, through which each passed in turn. As they disappeared, I also approached and peered through the aperture.

It was barely large enough to admit of a man's body passing through, and was, as I had expected, the entrance to a cavern, at the further end of which a fire was burning. Seated around it was a group of men, which the two I had followed joined.

Keeping well in the shadow of the wall, I made my way noiselessly along until I was near enough to the group to hear their conversation.

"Phil is right," one of them was saying. "We've got the plates and the queer all stowed away, but if they once began to search the cave they'd soon find them. We'd better wait here till after the wedding, and then, on the trip East, Gelston will be able to shove all the stuff we have on hand."

This proposal met with universal approval, and the whole gang, a dozen or more in number, moved close up to the entrance.

It seemed to me that the night never would pass; but it did at last, and the men set to work to prepare breakfast.

I was concealed in a niche in the wall of the cavern, where, unseen, I could hear every word they uttered.

From their conversation I learned that they all intended to be present at Gelston's wedding, with the exception of three, who were to be left to guard the cave.

"What is the use of any of us staying?" one of them said, at length. "Two or three are worse than none at all. Let us all go or all stay. If they come and find the cave

empty, they may go away again; but if they find two or three, they'll be dead sure they've struck the right spot."

The force of this reasoning seemed to strike his companions forcibly, and at last it was agreed they should all attend the wedding, leaving the cave unguarded.

For an hour or two longer they continued to talk and smoke, and then, by twos and threes, they began to leave the cavern.

Waiting for half an hour or so after the last one had departed, I emerged from my place of concealment and passed out of the cavern into the open air.

As rapidly as possible I made my way to town, meeting no one on the way, and proceeded directly to the office of the chief of police.

"You are just in time," he said, before I had time to utter a word. "I have made a discovery. These papers were found sewed up in the murdered woman's corset."

He spread several papers before me as he spoke. I glanced hurriedly through them, then at the clock upon the wall.

"There is no time to lose," I said. "We must act at once. Perhaps even now we may be too late, and the ceremony performed. I will go and make the arrest. Order out your available men and follow."

As I finished speaking I left the house and made my way as rapidly as possible to the church in which I knew Gelston was to be married that morning.

Already more than half the service had been performed as I reached the altar.

"Hold!" I commanded. "This marriage must not proceed!"

Then, placing my hand upon Gelston's shoulder, I added:

"Andrew Gelston, in the name of the law, I arrest you for the murder of your wife!"

Gelston cast a wild glance around. It was instantly responded to by half a dozen men, whom I recognized as the counterfeiters I had seen in the cavern, crowding forward.

My position was a perilous one, but happen what might, I was determined that Gelston should not escape me. Another moment and I should have carried out my threat, and in all probability paid for it with my own life, when the chief of police, with more than half a dozen officers, all armed with revolvers, entered the church.

At the sight of them the ardor of the counterfeiters cooled down at once, and in another moment I had the handcuffs on Gelston's wrists.

The papers found upon the murdered woman had proved conclusively that she was his wife, and with them was a note from him appointing an interview at the place where he had killed her.

Instead of spending the evening with the girl he was about to marry, he had only stayed a short time, and then had gone to the appointed place of meeting and stained his hands and soul with blood.

He was tried, found guilty, and suffered the penalty for his crime on the scaffold.

The plates, as well as an immense amount of bogus bills, were discovered in a hiding place in the cavern, and all the members of the gang were captured and sentenced to various terms of penal servitude.

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With practice it is possible to attain as great skill as with a real drum. The movable sounding board can be adjusted for either heavy or light playing. They are used extensively in schools for marching.

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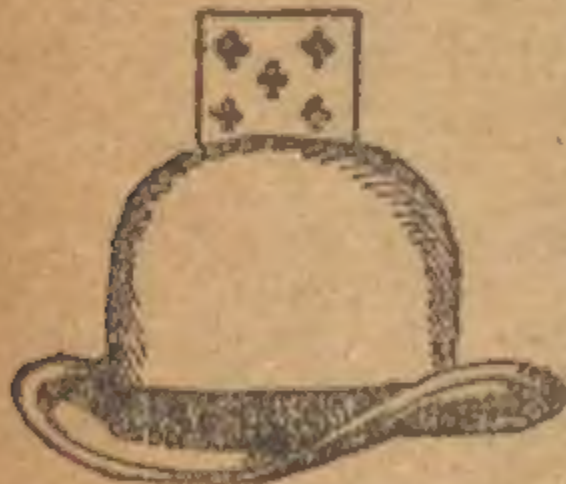
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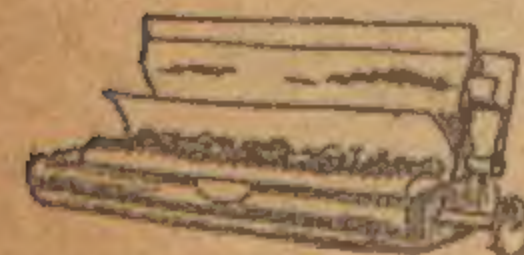
With this trick you barrow a hat, and apparently shove a card up through the crown, without injuring the card or hat. The operation can be reversed, the performer seemingly pushing the card down through the crown into the hat again. It is a

trick which will puzzle and interest the closest observer and detection is almost impossible. It is so simple that a child can learn how to perform it in a few minutes.

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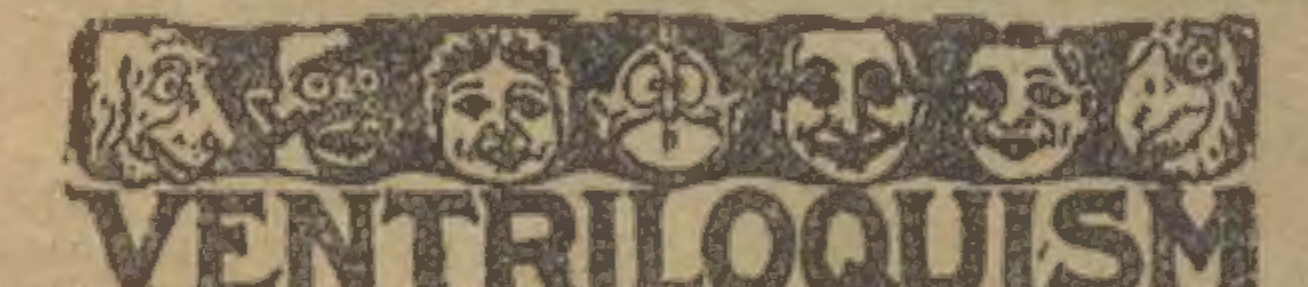
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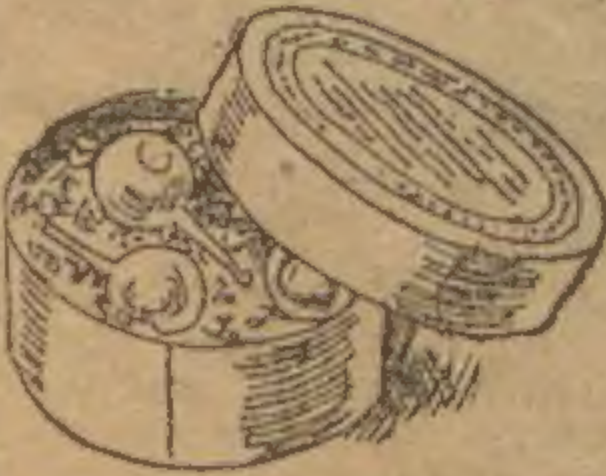
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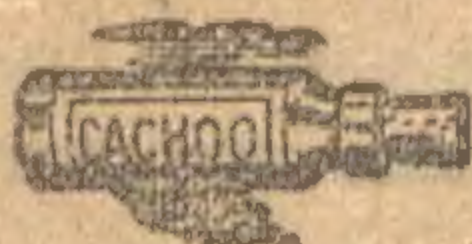


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THE PRINCESS OF YOGI CARD TRICK.

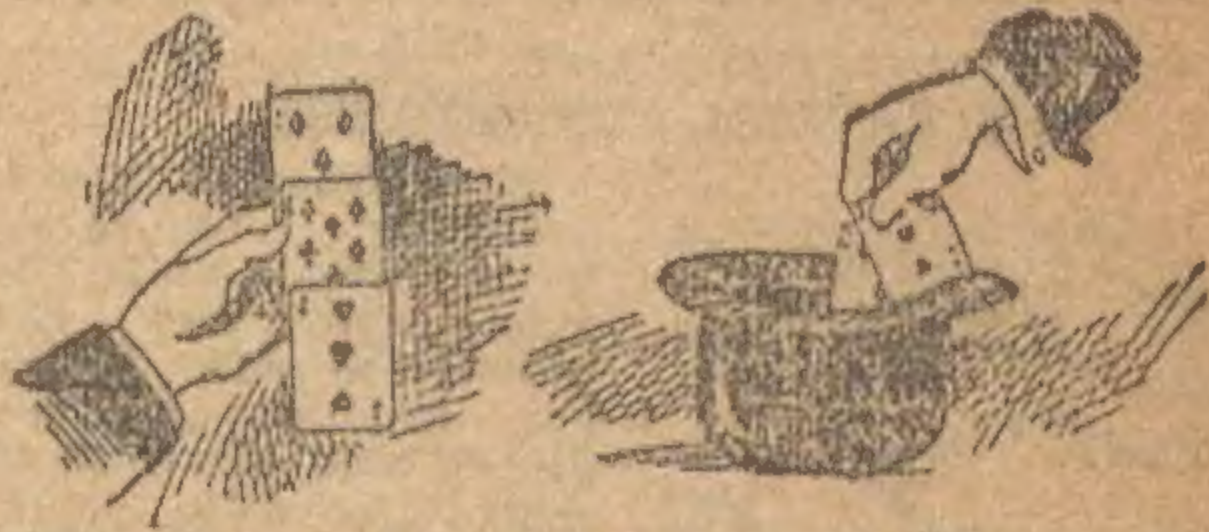
Four cards are held in the form of a fan and a spectator is requested to mentally select one of the four. The cards are now shuffled and one is openly taken away and placed in his pocket. The performer remarks that he has taken the card mentally selected by the spectator. The three cards are now displayed and the selected card is found to be missing. Reaching in his pocket the performer removes and exhibits the chosen card. Price, 15c.

J. KENNEDY, 303 West 127th St., N. Y.



JUMPING CARD.—A pretty little trick, easy to perform. Effect: A selected card returned to the deck jumps high into the air at the performer's command. Pack is held in one hand. Price of apparatus, with enough cards to perform the trick, 10c.

M. O'NEILL, 425 W. 56th St., N. Y.



THE DEVIL'S CARD TRICK.—From three cards held in the hand anyone is asked to mentally select one. All three cards are placed in a hat and the performer removes first the two that the audience did not select and passing the hat to them their card has mysteriously vanished. A great climax; highly recommended. Price, 10c.

H. F. LANG, 215 Walworth St., B'klyn., N. Y.



APPEARING BILLIARD BALL.—A solid billiard ball, beautifully made, can be made to appear in the bare hands with the sleeves rolled back to elbows. Very fine and easy to do. Price, 35c.

M. O'NEILL, 425 W. 56th St., N. Y.



RISEING PENCIL.

The performer exhibits an ordinary pencil and shows it top and bottom. The pencil is laid on the palm, the performer calling attention to his hypnotic power over innate objects. The pencil is seen slowly to rise, following the movements of the other hand. The witnesses are asked to pass their hand around it to assure themselves no thread or hair is used. Price, 25c.

J. KENNEDY, 303 West 127th St., N. Y.



"KNOCK-OUT" CARD TRICK.—Five cards are shown, front and back, and there are no two cards alike. You place some of them in a handkerchief and ask any person to hold them by the corners in full view of the audience. You now take the remaining cards and request anyone to name any card shown. This done, you repeat the name of the card and state that you will cause it to invisibly leave your hand and pass into the handkerchief, where it will be found among the other cards. At the word "Go!" you show that the chosen card has vanished, leaving absolutely only two cards. The handkerchief is unfolded by any person, and in it is found the identical card. Price, 10c.

M. O'NEILL, 425 W. 56th St., N. Y.



THE MULTIPLYING CORKS.—A small round box is shown to be empty and one of the spectators is allowed to place three corks in it. The cover is put on and the box is handed to one of the spectators, who, upon removing the cover, finds six corks in the box. Three of the corks are now made to vanish as mysteriously as they came. Very deceptive. Price, 15c.

H. F. LANG, 215 Walworth St., B'klyn., N. Y.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 4, 1912.

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BRIEF, BUT POINTED.

A record of 412 miles in four days has been made by an Alaskan dog team.

Oak trees an inch and a half high are grown by Chinese gardeners. They take root in thimbles.

The deepest lake in the United Kingdom is Loch Moray, which is 1,017 feet deep. Only seven deeper lakes are known in Europe, four being in Norway and three in Italy.

In Germany if a servant falls ill her mistress is not allowed to discharge her. On the contrary, she must pay fifty cents a day for her hospital expenses until she is entirely well.

Statistics of the Austrian Department of Finance show that during ten years Austrian and Hungarian immigrants to the United States sent home money to the amount of \$552,000,000.

It may not be generally known that child suicides, so numerous in Germany, are nearly as common in Russia. During 1907 some 400 children, under sixteen years of age, are said to have taken their lives in Russia.

A remarkable proof of how the high hat, whether of silk or of beaver, once reigned supreme is seen in the print of the fight between Sayers and Heenan, at Farnborough, in 1860. Nearly every man in the crowd is wearing a toppler.

Talking of men servants, a member of the Union League was telling his experience. "My man is all right," he said, "but I have a suspicion that he likes my brand of cigars. I upbraided him recently for helping himself so liberally to my cigars, because it looked as if he might be opening a shop somewhere, or at least supplying all his friends. "You don't think, sir," he protested, "that I'd do such a thing, sir. I still have four boxes left from my last employer's, and I like them very well, sir and I wouldn't for a moment think of changing, sir." "

An unusually high candlepower for city lighting is obtained with the new Gretzine gas burners, these being of the gas mantle type, but having the gas delivered under pressure by special piping. The new system is being tried by the municipality of Paris on the Boulevard Raspail and the Rue Monge, with high poles resembling arc light poles. The light is very brilliant and gives a better and more evenly distributed illumination than the usual gas lamp-post, and the superiority over the latter is quite marked. Several mantle burners are grouped together in one large globe, and the whole has a brightness resembling that of an arc light. Seeing that with the ordinary gas mantle burner the illumination per square inch surface of the mantle depends upon the temperature, and this in turn cannot go above what has been heretofore the limit, it was desired to increase the temperature, and thus obtain a brighter light. The problem was solved by delivering the gas under pressure to special mains by means of compressors, so that now the mantle works at a higher heat.

OUR COMIC COLUMN.

"Did you lend that forgetful friend of yours the book he asked for?" "Yes, but I took care to borrow his umbrella the same day."

"Didn't he make a failure of life at first?" "Well, yes; he failed at everything until he struck the happy idea of selling advice on how to succeed to young men who have more ambition than sense."

Mr. Scrubbs (indignantly)—Sir, I have just discovered that your son has engaged himself to two of my daughters. Mr. Grubbs (stupefied)—The young rascal! He should be compelled to marry them both.

Innkeeper—Going to make an early start to see the glacier to-day, I see. Do you know, it moves at the rate of only one mile an hour? Tourist—Yes, but my wife is so slow getting ready that I'm afraid we'll miss it after all.

New Lodger—Why does that fellow in the next room have an alarm clock ringing in his room in the morning? It never wakes him up. Old Lodger—He sets it so's it'll keep ringing until one of the other roomers goes in and calls him.

First Clerk—Eh? Had six weeks' vacation last summer. Second Clerk—Yes; Silk, Ribbon & Co. always give all unmarried clerks that much. It draws trade. "I don't see how." "Simple enough. All the girls we get engaged to keep coming in all winter, to snub us."

She (walking home from church)—Did you notice that lovely Parisian hat Mrs. Styler was wearing? I could think of nothing else the whole time. He—No, my dear, can't say I did. To tell you the truth, I was half asleep most of the time. She—Then you ought to be ashamed to own it. A nice lot of good the service must have done you, I must say!

PLUCK AND LUCK

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